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*The*  
Problem of Jesus

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CLYDE L. KUHN

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*The*  
**PROBLEM OF JESUS**

*By* CLYDE L. KUHN

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TO ALL THOSE WHO ARE FINDING THAT THE PROBLEM  
OF JESUS IS THE PROBLEM OF THEIR OWN  
LIVES, THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED





## Foreword

**N**INETEEN centuries separate the Bible and the life of the Bible from us today, centuries of human life upon which has come the blessed and unbroken impact of Jesus. The New Testament is a record of the first century of that impact. It was not written, however, with historical accuracy and for historical purposes, but for the edification of the people of that age. For our own age, we are making a record far more exact and true because of better means and methods. The scientific comparison and evaluation of the two records and living experiences are a fascinating task. This is the ever-present problem of Jesus. Its most marvelous result is that it leaves men freer and in more vital fellowship with Him.

CLYDE L. KUHN.

Strongsville, Ohio.

January 1928.



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## Introduction

WHAT a difference between the Old Testament and the New. To pass from one to the other is like going at once from the lingering shades of night into the full light of noon-day. Something wonderful surely has happened to the writers of the New Testament. In the flood of light that comes from its pages, one feels somewhat foolish to hunt for shadows and fore-gleams. All is such wonderful sunlight. He is really ashamed, after diligent search, to call attention to mistakes immaterial and secondary. As we read its pages, we cannot but feel that something unusual has come to pass in order to make men think and act and speak and write that way. Something with one sweep has brushed the cobwebs from men's minds, with one plunge has washed clean their hearts from unholy desires and purposes, and with one seven-times heated furnace has tempered like steel their wills to God's will.

Primitive myths and traditions decrease or disappear entirely. Real and wonderful historic events predominate and interpolations become few and insignificant. Imprecations and uncontrolled, passionate conflicts with the enemies of God, such as abound in the Old Testament, give place to a strange, quiet, unobtrusive resistance. Uncertain visions and messages of

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doom, justice without mercy, a holy God far distant from men and lifted up, make way for clear vision, compassion and infinite love, and a heavenly Father loving and caring for his own children. Blind zeal for laws and ceremonies is swallowed up in a new freedom in the spirit and truth. Samson tales and idealized patriarchs and heroes, Mordecai revenges, witches of Endor and magicians interpreting dreams, apocalyptic musings, plagues and wonder-working without purpose — no more of these. It is Stephen stoned to death, Paul in shipwreck, disciples loosed from prison, reason enthroned, a new order of life, five thousand converted in a day and the poor and needy with a friend above all others—things worth believing. No more enlarging conceptions of God's truth from Moses to Isaiah, or "Sunrise of Revelation," or forced and desperate optimism too faint to look far beyond the grave; but fullness of revelation, faith rooted and grounded, infinite love and truth and hope, resurrection sure and life eternal. These are the sublime and wonderful truths. These are the blessed things we read in the New Testament. Surely something has happened.

Indeed something has happened in this weary, ignorant, sin-cursed old world—something more than the passing of time with its historic developments. And that something is God having come to his own. Nothing less is sufficient cause for it all. Human philosophers mentally reaching out after God, human prophets righteously grasping to enforce Him among men,

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have been too slow for divine wisdom. Enough of man's slow climbing. Enough of prophecies and "Suffering Servants of Jehovah" in far distant, indefinite times. Realities are at hand. Make way for God's coming down to men. He is here and in men. The Messianic idea is crammed full. Into his own world, life giver, holy and righteous one, friend and elder brother—he has come! Come with power! Amazed and senseless, no wonder they say he multiplies loaves and fishes, masters human ills, gives sight to blind eyes, health to leprous flesh, and life to dead bodies. He comes in glorious power and purifies and makes holy in love. Among men trying to be good, he is goodness itself. Infinite purity and love, The Light of the world and Sun of righteousness floods the world. And it is no wonder men write such beatitudes, endure such persecutions and become such transformed and holy men. They must yield to their Master and Lord. Evil men fall as dead before his almighty power and glory and majesty. His is the reconciliation that reconciles, even men to God. Worship and praise and honor are his and his alone. And the ages are glad to repeat the acclaim. Indeed something has happened.

This being so, it is plainly reasonable that to start with that which has happened. This is fundamental to the Bible as well as to all things. And while we will give the place of primacy in every chapter to the Biblical record, it is not with the purpose of making it basic in our reasoning. For foundations, we must dig through all records to the living experiences.





## CHAPTER I.

### Method

#### (a) OUR PROBLEM.

**A**T one time there was a problem of the Old Testament. Men saw it and worked it out. That wonderful collection of ancient writings was analysed and criticized to the last detail and all its historic setting was brought forth. As a result we have it now in all its proper logical and chronological order. It has become again a living literature and its genuine religious value evident for all time.

Then arose the same problem of the New Testament. Men saw that and worked it out in the same way. And again, the religious value of this wonderful collection of Christian writings was established forever in its true historical setting.

But through all this study there remained the supreme and absolute authority of the "Holy Bible." Men made a fetish of the Bible. It was the holy and sacred "Word of God" and equal with God. Men reasoned their creeds second-hand from this Book. Men swore by this Book. They came to God and were righteous, but it was the righteousness of the Bible. They were Christians, but it was the Christianity of the Bible. The only Jesus they knew was the

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Christ of the Bible. There was no other to their minds. To come to him was to come through the Bible. Therefore the "New Testament" was written with capital letters and held as divine as Jesus himself. Christianity was to believe the Bible, not to understand it. Religious belief was transferred from persons to writings about persons.

But in these latter days, and with many during that period just briefly described, that absolute authority of the Bible—New Testament as well as Old—is gone. It is gone, first and simply because it is more logical to place authority with experience than with the record of experience. It is gone second and chiefly because, with the help of our well established scientific knowledge (especially with that of psychology, sociology and biology) we are now able to get at the facts of living experience in all ages as never before. Most of the New Testament is not from eye witnesses, neither is it contemporaneous with the life of Jesus. Above all it is not a stenographer's report. Furthermore, eye witnesses and contemporaneous records are of value and determine matters with authority only when they are able to weigh the particular facts in hand. They must be judged accordingly. So we cannot reconstruct, as our fathers thought they could, the living experiences of Jesus from the New Testament records alone and without careful criticism in the light of all human experience. What we find there is not all cold, bare, reliable and solid historic fact. We must make

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careful distinctions. The didactic purpose bulks large. The personal factor of each writer is there and the religious experience of the time.

When we deal with the New Testament we are dealing with the religious thought of a particular age of human life more or less transformed by the spiritual power of Jesus, but not wholly so nor at all perfectly so. Most of it is the old Judaism struggling to reassert itself and only partly transformed by Jesus. The only authority of the written records is their witness to this vital but partial transformation. We are compelled to dig through these to get at the raw materials, and living facts of the transforming personality. Thus the spirit of Jesus is set free to come personally to each one of us and our problem is solved. The New Testament then becomes not a picture of Jesus, but a picture of men and society startled into new life by Jesus.

Now men desire to know Jesus as a person, a friend, a companion, just as John knew him. They want to come to him. They understand "The Messiah" and even "The Man of Galilee" and are not contented. The true and supreme religion of men is in spirit and truth. And they are wondering if they may find Jesus there; if they can come to him immediately as did the first disciples. Are we to be compelled to know him only through their mediation? Or have we the same equal privilege of immediate and personal fellowship? Can we rightly understand the Bible and use it as il-

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lustrative material and give our whole soul to Jesus our Lord?

Verily, this will be a new way of reading the Bible, a bold venture. This will boldly assert that men may and do come to know Jesus first as a person and in persons, and then become acquainted with him historically in the Biblical record. This will compel us to stand forth naked and alone before Jesus as the living God—he who lives and works among men and in men today, immediately and not mediately—can he be so conceived? Does the record we have allow this? Can we worship Jesus without doing it through the Bible record as sacred as himself? This is the problem of this day. Let us see if this can be worked out in connection with the book called *The Gospel According To Matthew*. If we can solve the problem there; maybe we can do it everywhere else.

### (b) THE GUIDING PRINCIPLE.

Now the principle running through all the following pages is personal experience. This, as it is today, is the only criterion men have. By living experience, all truth is made real. There is no other knowledge, spiritual or scientific, than that true to living experience. What cannot be made real in human experience cannot be made a necessary matter of fact or of belief. Such things are outside our consciousness and beyond us, however much is written to the contrary. Of these we know nothing. The God beyond our living, active consciousness cannot at the same time be a part



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of our experience. His super-human activity may be and no doubt is very great. No one knows how great. We can be concerned, however, only with that part of Him, his self-revelation, that comes within our experience. So when a revelation of God is said to come to certain individuals and yet is found to be contrary to human experience or is not and cannot be experienced by other men, we have a situation utterly impossible. That sort of thing is a burden the disciples of Jesus cannot carry. It will not have much place in these pages. All must come into the realm of life, personal life and a personal God, self-revealed to us in our living human relations.

Fortunately, the application of this principle to any period of the past is not difficult because of what we term in evolution "living fossils." Species of animals and plants reach a certain stage of development and then stop. They have been arrested in their growth and remain so. Their life goes on reproducing itself, yet seemingly without progress. In the divine economy the evolutionary process is ended. They are living representatives of past and completed stages of evolution. Study them and you study the past. And this is true in religious experience. We have before our eyes today in living human beings every variety and phase of religious experience. So that the few centuries back to Jesus are but a few days. Look about and we can find men telling of a religious experience, now real or fancied, the same as that recorded of those days. In un-

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derstanding that past record, these arrested persons or backward groups of the human family are a great help. They are an unanswerable argument in determining the real from the fancied or purely psychic experience. What we are concerned with in these studies is the self-revelations of God. They make up what we call religion. They are the basis of human experience and progress. They create and become the chief part of life. And of course we will find them there. Of course, also, they will be progressive in their unfolding vital content.

### (c) INSPIRED WRITERS.

After what has been said, it is hardly necessary to state what we mean by inspiration. The monks of the Middle Ages in their manuscripts of the gospels represent the authors as seated upon the clouds with angelic messengers by their sides, prompting them in their writings. Moses is represented coming down from the mountain where he received the law written by the finger of God in two tables of stone. The Babylonian law-giver Hammurabi states distinctly that he received the laws of his code directly from the god Shamash. And many Christians today think God wrote the Bible very much as a man dictates to his secretary. All which would be very simple and an easy way of divine inspiration. It requires no great effort to picture it or to think it. And it gives rise to an absolute and quieting confidence to those thinking that way.

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But it is a mechanical process, not a living one. And above all it is not true.

The writers of the gospels were real men, self-possessed, awake, and active under divine influences that come to all Christians. They worked as all writers, collecting materials and selecting those things which they thought would best serve their purposes. Jesus in their writings was necessarily the Jesus whom the particular author conceived to the best of his ability. He had a Christian heart and mind. That is, he was sincerely and devoutly open to the divine leading. He was writing out of a full life. The divine element was not in the writing first and apart from the writer, but in the enriched experience of the man in his relation with Jesus. His whole writing was simply himself or a part of himself put down on parchment. It is colored by his personality, aim and local conditions. God reveals himself in his orderly natural ways and their ever-changing form.

Therefore our problem is to get at the local, concrete and personal life of that period and the same of today. Our free spirits are busy living their lives in local and earthly ways, often very much more intricate and complicated than those of Bible times. We are not copying the past, but with God, living on in a cooperative way the ever enlarging life. In so doing we make many personal connections in the present universal social order and organism. Our connection with the past is not causal. We do not need to under-

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stand the past before we can live today and in order to ground our lives in it. We are to live, and use the past only as an illustration and an example. Too much has our education been an effort to conform to and relive the past. It should be to live first and then investigate the past. Standing thus in this free, cooperative divine-human activity, our spirits throb in sympathy with those great souls of the past who boldly ventured the same free activity. Let me tell you this method of study of the two records and comparison of the two experiences is new to most people, so new that it is startling.

## CHAPTER II.

### Raw Materials

A HISTORY teacher of a great university, in his teaching method, outlines a course of study through a period of time and a section of humanity; staking down the leading and vital events. These he notes one by one in their proper relations and with the scantiest amount of detail. The bare facts are set down, as nearly as possible free from local coloring and yet with a fine devotion to the truth. Life at the time and place that is being studied is his aim. Find this life and put the student into direct contact with it, and his work is done. The student must do the rest. That this original life, revealed in the original records of words and deeds, has come down to us very much modified by contemporaneous witnesses and subsequent historians, is a profound conviction with him. As much as possible, this modification must be disregarded. And each age, with the original documents and events in hand, must write its own history.

Therefore the true historian has a most delicate and complicated task. The appearance of things on first sight is indeed a crazy quilt. What are the pieces, and when they are found, what are the warp and woof? Can he ever get at the raw materials? And if so, can

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he weave them into a true pattern and picture such as the present will be able to understand? Can he bridge the gulf between past and present? In doing so, a second great problem arises. Does he understand his own age? If the past confuses him, the present staggers him. Infinite wisdom and insight alone can both live today and at the same time relive the past in its true relations to the present. No. He cannot do this. Hardly can he become a good historian, much less a perfect one. If ever there was absolute proof that God never intended us to depend on the records of the past for vital connection with him, it is in the complete failure of the historian at his best. Only the present is alive and in touch with God. If God does not reveal himself now, if Jesus is not present in life now, we are hopeless and lost. Be a historian, if you want to have upset for you all theories of absolute authority and verbal inspiration. Yea, verily, all theories of inspired writings for living men go vanishing like the mist. Very quickly the historian learns to depend on the living present, and to live there—if he is wise and strong willed. If not, then he is hopelessly at the mercy of the past and is soon transformed into a cheap imitation of mummies and monuments. Look at him but do not live with him.

Searching for and discovering raw materials is fascinating, therefore, but dangerous, in many ways, for the student of religious life. Indeed it is, but let us do it with Jesus.



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It may not be so difficult after all. For the Hebrews were not philosophers, and therefore their historians had no philosophy of history into which they wove events and explained them. So the Bible as it is, save for the plainly manifest educational motive, comes very near to being a collection of raw materials pure and simple. "A distinct characteristic of the Bible" finely described by H. E. Fosdick in his *Modern Use of The Bible*, (p. 170), ought to be quoted here. "All its attitudes and its whole course of thought were arrived at experimentally, not theoretically; they were the result, not of philosophic speculation, but of practical living, reacting on thought. The idea of God, in characteristic Greek or Indian philosophy was under the sway of an impressive speculative theory—God was the Absolute; He was Pure Being. Everywhere in the best thinking of India and Greece one finds that speculative concept in control.

"When, however, one turns to the Bible, he finds himself in another realm. The Hebrews were not philosophers; their thinking was practical, imaginative, dramatic. Abstract theory never dominated their minds about anything, and in particular never laid the rails on which the idea of God must willy-nilly run to its logical conclusion. Rather, in the Bible, the idea of God developed as a man walks, following the grade as it comes, up hill and down dale, going across lots when that seems shorter, and encountering alike the unexpected beauties and unforeseen

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obstacles of a pedestrian journey close to mother earth. In consequence, the idea of God in the Bible may be less consistent—certainly it is less abstract and theoretically determined in its development—but it is immeasurably closer to human life. It never loses contact with that. The writers of the Book did not call God by abstract names. The Absolute, Pure Being—no such words and no such ideas in the Bible. Father, Mother, Husband, Friend—such are his names in Scripture. The writers rose to think of Him as Hosea did out of the experiences of his own domestic tragedy, or as Jesus did out of his filial fellowship. Every thought of God in the Bible came warmly out of actual experience; every stage in its development was associated with practical factors in the people's life that called it forth."

### (a) MECHANICAL MATTERS.

Now in this task, we can use very nicely, to start with, the work of others. Very many mechanical matters have fortunately been determined for us. After work that requires volumes to set it forth, these things appear concerning the Gospel According To Matthew:

(1) It is not the work of one man but the work of an editor or redactor collecting, selecting from and using the writings of others. Then it is evident also that the work of the editor has been interpolated by others. A story has been added here by one person, a paragraph developed there by another person, a sentence introduced in another place as an editorial com-

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ment of still another person bent on emphasizing a certain thing. Meanwhile the years have gone by. For instance the first three chapters of Matthew. How many writers and editors these represent we may never know. This makes the unity, argument and aim of the book rather mechanical. It lacks very much the unity and logical march of a great thinker step by step and part by part.

(2) In the main there are eight grand divisions of the book which we will follow. These show a general plan or argument which runs thus: Jesus is the Messiah foretold by Old Testament writers. Everywhere occurs, "in order that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet." His works of preaching, teaching and healing are viewed miraculously and therefore support all this. He suffers and dies to ransom all the world from sin. And he will come again at the end of their age to inaugurate his new kingdom of righteousness.

(3) The occasion of the book seems to be: Jerusalem is fallen and the temple is destroyed. This makes the date of the book about 70 A. D.; and it may be a long time after that. The Messianic hope is gone, or is slipping, so far as a temporal kingdom is concerned. To hold the Jews who profess Christianity loyal to the faith seems to be the great matter in hand.

(4) The author is manifestly a Jew but certainly not Matthew, one of the twelve. His accurate quotations (45 of them) of the Old Testament are suffi-

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cient to establish this fact. Besides his thought is Hebraic. But who he was it is very likely we shall never know.

(5) The sources of the writer are three: *The Gospel of Mark*, the *Oracles of Jesus*, a document composed by Matthew in the Aramaic, and the many stories that were the common heritage of the whole Christian communion.

These five fundamental matters are accepted without question as well established by others whose arguments to that end are more or less familiar to all who read this chapter. They are always assumed in the following search for raw materials.

### (b) ILLUSTRATIONS.

As this chapter is to be illustrative of the method of search everywhere, we may select a few passages of the book which do not appear necessary to the general argument and could therefore be overlooked, but which lend themselves nicely to this work. Chap. 14:13 to chap. 20:28 is such a part of the book. The things recorded here seem to be very much aside from the original purpose of the author and lack entirely an orderly grouping. The one fact that Jesus is the Messiah is maintained. That alone connects it with the rest of the book. Therefore the use of this material here will save it from complete neglect and will also show the method used in the whole book. In going through this material we may discover what the author

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used everywhere as a basis of his writing, what Jesus really did and what is forever vital and saving.

Let us repeat that we do not have a stenographer's report of events, nor even a newspaper reporter's account, (fortunately?). More than twenty years go by before men write down the events of the life of Jesus, so far as we are able to determine, except some of his sayings. Some argue for at least fifty years and others more than a century. The events are therefore told and retold till there develop the usual variations in narration. Therefore to get at the facts, human experience alone can lead us. About five thousand are fed, according to chap. 14:13-21. Much detail is given concerning the place, how the food is obtained, the amount, manner of serving and fragments left, etc. All this is a report which, if true in detail, absolutely requires records written the very day it took place and by a reliable observer. Again, chap. 15:29-39 tells of another feeding of the multitude, 4000 in all. Compare these two accounts with each other and also with the two similar accounts in Mark 6:32-44 and 8:1-10 upon which they are based. Frankly, they appear to be two accounts of the same event. More than probably they are such. And when it is observed how the details are neglected by Matthew in copying from Mark, the true historian is compelled to state that we have no way of determining how far went this liberty of throwing in or modifying details with purpose, with

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Mark as well as Matthew, except to fall back upon common human experience.

First memory and word of mouth for years are responsible for the report of an event. Then the writers take the report and write it up in accord with their purpose and mode of thought. Going thus back to the basic event, we are justified in concluding that a crowd of people are caught with little food. Yet, some have been thoughtful and under Jesus' leadership all may have been supplied with food. Beyond this, with present light, we cannot go. But the record itself takes us that far.

The disciples enter a boat and cross the lake of Galilee. They are caught in a storm and are about to go down. Then the wind ceases. So much is raw materials. On the Sea of Galilee today, storms arise suddenly and cease just as suddenly. This fact helps not a little in understanding this event. Also, the very similar story of another stormy voyage on the Sea of Galilee (Mark 8:23-27) helps here. The two accounts cause one to think they are based on only one event. And the way Jesus is said to address them in their terrible fright, according to Mark 4:39, (Be quiet. Stop talking.), might indicate that he was calming the frightened disciples rather than the sea. If so, and meanwhile the storm ceases suddenly, the disciples transfer his words to the stormy sea and so relate the incident as miraculous. This is not an unreasonable in-



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terpretation. The chances are that it is the correct one.

In chap. 15:1-20, comes the argument with the Pharisees and scribes over ceremonial and real defilement, and the further explanations to the disciples alone. This line of reasoning, even to the quotation from Isaiah, is one that doubtless occurred on many occasions in Jesus' increasing conflict with the Pharisees. With it, may go also his sharp statements in chap. 23 and his teaching concerning work on the Sabbath Day recorded in chap. 12. It is all so true to the whole course of his life and teachings and to the ways of men in their religious practices that we may conclude we have a reliable report. It is exactly like Jesus to talk in this way, and to do it so often and in connection with so many incidents that his followers made no mistake in constructing these reports. The words and sentences, arrangements and particular reasonings are theirs. The striking metaphors and parables are doubtless a true recollection. We can see Jesus facing these hostile men and putting them to silence in this way, and afterwards giving careful estimate of their character to his disciples. No doubt he spoke of them many, many times; many more than those of which we have record.

The incident following, (vs.21-28) concerning the Canaanitish woman and her demon-possessed daughter, near Tyre and Sidon, is full of local coloring. Whatever Jesus did here is made to conform to the concep-

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tions of those writing of it. This is in great contrast to the twenty verses preceding. If one reads Mark's report, (7:24-30), of the same incident he receives an unmistakable suggestion of what the author does in working up his raw materials. Again there is liberty of details. So we are justified in seeking the basic truth. Plainly, an event is made to do service to the author's purpose. Bulking large in his mind is Jesus' freedom of approach to all people, regardless of race and class distinctions. This is true. In a perfectly natural way, he comes to all alike. But how unusual and remarkable this is to the author of Matthew, is seen in the way he presents this event. What took place in the meeting of Jesus and the Canaanitish woman is subordinate to and buried deep beneath the fact that Jesus gave thought to others outside Israel. The big thing in the author's mind is transferred to Jesus, as though it were his big problem also. But the account of Jesus and the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well shows this was no difficulty with him. He went through no such a struggle as Paul in going as missionary to the Gentiles. He was touched alike by all and helped all. That is the truth here.

Chap. 16:1-12 deals with the demands and teaching of the Pharisees. A sharp rebuke is given to their evil-purposed demand for a sign. Repent ye first. Recall the preaching of Jonah. And to the disciples he explains in detail what he means by his, "Beware the leaven of the Pharisees." This is all a true picture of

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Jesus and his relation to these men. No violence is done to either party.

The next paragraph, (chap. 16:13-20), is a well worked-out story of an event or conversation of Jesus with his disciples concerning report of himself and their opinion. It is all presented so as to lead up to the disclosure of himself as Christ and Son of God. Just what were the raw materials? the basis of this paragraph? Did the reasoning of Jesus run this way? These questions seem to be worked out as mechanically as though made to order. In all probability, the substance of it all is simply an interested question of Jesus in a conversational way regarding public opinion of himself.

Here is an event which Mark, 8:27-29, tells of in thirteen lines and to which the author of Matthew gives thirty lines. Plainly, Mark's account does not satisfy the later writer. It does not emphasize his purpose sufficiently. Jesus must be set forth as the Christ and divinely sent. In him and his followers is salvation. Could there be found anywhere a better instance of the common method of the writers of biography and history? They all take the bare facts and write them up in their own forms of thought and purposes. And this is right. Indeed, it is all they can do. Therefore each age must re-write history. Only thus can it save itself from being a mere imitation of the past, if it reads and studies the records of the past. Here Mark comes very close to reporting the bare facts

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in the conversation. He has very little of local coloring, very little to strip away or disregard in order to get at the substance, while the other writer has a good deal. Having once found the substance, viz., Jesus' intense interest in how the people were accepting him, we are able to think on this thing in connection with Jesus and to apply it to our experience.

Let us stop a while longer with this paragraph. Suppose we compare it with the two accounts of the historic event of the capture of Jericho. C. F. Kent in *The Making of A Nation*, (p. 95), gets at the facts in this way, "According to these investigators the late tradition that these walls fell flat to the earth as the result of a miracle finds no confirmation in the ruins themselves. The older Hebrew account, however, in their judgment agrees perfectly with the evidence revealed by the spade of the excavator. In imagination it is easy to follow the perilous journey of the Hebrew spies and to appreciate the importance of the negotiations by which they secured the cooperation of Rahab and of the clan within Jericho which she represented. Later came the Hebrew hordes from across the Jordan bearing with them the ark which symbolized to them the presence of Jehovah, who had led them on to victory in many an early battle. Behind their impregnable walls the inhabitants of Jericho must have laughed scornfully at the desert host, that seemed utterly incapable of an effective attack or of a protracted siege. According to many modern interpreters the

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earliest Hebrew host marched silently about the Canaanite stronghold. At first the inhabitants of Jericho, accustomed to Arab strategy, undoubtedly held themselves ready for defence. When no attack came, their vigilance was gradually relaxed. At last on the seventh day, when conditions were favorable, at the preconcerted signal, a trumpet blast, the Hebrews rushed toward the walls. The gates were probably opened by their allies within the city, and Jericho was quickly captured. The method of attack recorded in the prophetic narrative was very similar to the strategy used a little later by the Hebrews in the capture of the smaller towns of Ai and Bethel. They are the methods still employed by the Bedouins in their attacks upon the outposts of Palestine."

Now here are two accounts of that great event. One makes it a miracle. The other does not. What are the facts as raw materials for the writers? Experience common to all invading forces, conquering and settling by force of arms, lays open the facts. There stand the ruins of Jericho, with walls intact, identified beyond question. The walls did not all fall down at the blast of the trumpet. Also, spies are reported to have found their way, previous to the attack, into Jericho and out again, to have been befriended by one Rahab, and to have made agreement with her to spare her and her house on a certain signal in the moment of attack. This, too, is true to jealousies and rivalries within the Canaanite city states and to war and

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its methods in all ages. And these two facts, taken with the other one of strategy which Professor Kent points out, well justify the explanation he gives and the facts he unearths regarding that great event.

Go to, now. Let us do this same thing with this paragraph. Every leader in the thick of the fight for his cause becomes over anxious about public opinion. He therefore asks his friends how matters stand. That is the experience of all. It therefore is reasonable that such a conversation arose, maybe many times. But why the answers involving Peter and the "Church"? These seem a little strange. Where else does Jesus speak thus? He talked of spiritual life and its laws, of the seed he was planting in society and its growth. But such detailed expressions concerning an institution belong not to him but to the Christian Church centuries after Jesus lived. The church with St. Peter as its foundation and with keys to unlock and lock heaven for men, determine beyond question the writer of this paragraph lived when that was a cardinal doctrine. It therefore seemed good to him to set forth the conversations of Jesus after this fashion. His propaganda motive on behalf of the church was of more importance than the bare statement of the historic facts. Down through all of this we must needs dig in order to unearth the facts. His propaganda may be good and true. (I believe the institution of the church truly holds the fate of men in its hands.) But this particular putting is not on that account the



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exact words of Jesus. All this reasoning has no small weight in fixing the date of the book of Matthew and in New Testament exegesis. This is, indeed, a key paragraph.

Again, the preconceptions of the writer are revealed in the next paragraph, (chap. 16:21-28). The suffering, death, resurrection and second coming of Jesus are foretold. Now what do we have here of solid substance? Clearly this: Jesus is coming to the end of his work. The determined opposition is soon going to have its way with him. He has offended the religious leaders. He must surrender to them and retract or their religious bigotry will destroy him. He knows to what limits they will go in such matters. Have they not killed the prophets and John? Therefore he tells his disciples about coming events; talks with them concerning what to expect just as any religious leader would do. He sets forth the values of the physical life he will lose in comparison with the spiritual life he will gain. This is priceless. While he will die, the kingdom he is founding in dying for the truth will live with himself as the heart and soul of it. "There are those living now, and some of you, who will see that kingdom and be a part of it after I am gone and because I am true to it and to the Father even in death."

But after many years are gone by and Jesus and his message have been worked into the Jewish religious conceptions, one of those Jews puts down this conversation or teaching as we read it in the verses we are

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considering. To his Jewish mind, Jesus tells his disciples how he must go to Jerusalem, suffer and die, and on the third day be raised from the dead. And then later on, "Come in the glory of his Father with his angels"; "coming in his kingdom." It is all planned out for him in the wonderful foreknowledge of the Old Testament writers. He simply fulfills prophetic utterances, going as a lamb to the slaughter. To this is added the notion of his coming again out of heaven as he went up into heaven, a notion or hope developed in the years after Jesus died and which we now see was in fact a mistaken hope. All of these are the arguments and purpose of the writer interpreting and molding a conversation of Jesus. We must dig through these to get down to the bed-rock facts stated in the preceding paragraph.

This, too, seems such an important matter to the author, that he mentions two other times when Jesus makes virtually the same statements, (chap. 17:22, 23) and (chap. 20:17-19). However, while there is nothing new in this repetition, it indicates that Jesus often told of the end and prepared his disciples for it as best he could.

Chap. 17:14-20 relates another miracle. When these twenty-eight lines are compared with the sixty lines in Mark which are required to record the same event, we see the same liberty as to details observed already. This time, however, it is Mark who gives the greater number of details. Yet both aim to make this event

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an illustration of the power of faith in curing the sick. This is true to their philosophy. All sickness is due to evil spirits or to sin. Therefore it is the proper work of the religious man to deal with the demon troubling the afflicted person. Faith or prayer is the great spiritual exercise or power needed as a basis of casting out demons and restoring health. One not able to cure the sick is therefore lacking in faith. This philosophy is attributed to Jesus, and he is also said to call his disciples to its realization.

What is the truth here? One thing is sure; this philosophy cannot, in the light of his teachings, justly be attributed to Jesus. A second thing is sure; it will not stand as established truth today. And a third thing is sure; we need more accurate observation and record to determine what this event was both as to the nature of the sickness and also as to what Jesus actually did. So much is necessary in evaluating the record as it is. Then, in connection with their false philosophy, and in all probability, the most important factor in the narrative is the psychic state, which existed then and with some today, and which makes possible the belief in instantaneous cures of any and all diseases. It would require very little factual basis for this mind to build up in all sincerity the record we have. This is the big thing here to be explained, rather than the basic fact. In these cases, the raw materials are mostly psychic—one of the marvels of human life dealt with in the chapter, "Religion and Miracle."

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The story of the half-shekel temple tax, (chap. 17:24-17), seems to be recorded with the purpose of teaching that Jesus and his followers are children of the temple and therefore exempt from taxes. Taxes are placed only on aliens. The value of such a teaching on Peter is evident at once. No doubt Jesus availed himself of every possible means of teaching it.

The question of rank, (chap. 18:1-14), among disciples is marvelously illustrated in these verses. It is an oft-repeated teaching of Jesus, that chief place belongs to the one doing the greatest service to his fellow men and not to the one seeking formal recognition of authority. How natural that the nature of a child should illustrate this humble attitude. Then having mentioned the child, the writer makes its value supreme. Woe to the man offending it. Save the child at all cost. Surely, these sayings are of Jesus, however they are wrought into these lines. With these thoughts, go also vss. 13-15 of chap. 19.

Vss. 15-20 set forth the mode of procedure with offenders. While this is true to the spirit and thought of Jesus, and is most simple, direct and reasonable in its steps one after another, its form of putting is the author's, beyond all question. Jesus would hardly have said this in this way; thus anticipating the detailed organization of the church.

Chap. 19:1 states that Jesus "came into the borders of Judaea beyond Jordan." This illustrates the author's frame-making for the materials. The times

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and places of the utterance of Jesus' teachings and of the performance of his works are quite a matter of convenience to the author. They are stated as definite, but are evidently most indefinite. He is making a loosely constructed framework for a series of events and teachings that come to him in various ways rather than giving definite locations and chronological records. This too, is in accord with the time and circumstances of writing; being so long after the occurrences. Whether the Pharisees raised the question of divorce, recorded in vss. 3-12 at this time or some other time and place is immaterial and unsettled by the first verse of the chapter. So, too, the parable of the Unmerciful Servant recorded in the last half of chap. 18 has no definite location as following Jesus' statement of duty toward offenders. All this is purely a matter of the author's judgment in arranging his materials. In general, his order does no great violence. But it is far from being as exact as it appears.

One other matter here, (chap. 21:12-14), tells of casting the traders out of the temple. This event is recorded by all four writers, and John states that he made a whip and drove them violently from the temple. This seems strange for Jesus as he is presented everywhere else. Is he loving his enemies and doing good to those who persecute him? And in this connection also, is chap. 23 an exact verbal account of his exposing, denouncing and warning against the Pharisees? Did Jesus pronounce upon them the seven woes there

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recorded? This, too, seems strange for Jesus. If he can do these two things in the way recorded, to what limits of denunciation and of the use of violence may not his followers go? Surely here is a real problem. How harmonize these two things with the rest of Jesus' life and teachings? Also, how shall we relate them to our experiences?

If we grant Jesus a holy passionate hate of evil rising to the Nth power in a hand to hand grip with sin at its worst and argue that he was all the time in perfect self-control and rightly and justly dealing with it, we are no better off. Is that the highest reaction of the soul in the presence of wickedness vile and cruel? If so, what means the silence before Pilate and the prayer in Gethsemane? That is the climax. Why then does not break forth that same passionate hate? Would not his soul be justified to rise at that moment into that so-called holy passion of sharp words and violent action? It surely would. But not so. Hate in the soul of a good man in its most passionate moment does not lead to such action and speech. When it comes to such a white heat, it breaks over into love and goes forth in broken words, compassionate looks and merciful actions. Pity, sympathy, patience, forbearance, long-suffering, mercy, groanings that cannot be uttered, tender, helpful deeds are the true marks of the good man at white heat of hate of sin. When Jesus rebuked those traders and grafters in the temple, when he answered the bigoted Pharisees, it was with the same look



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and words that were given to Peter caught in base denial. It was with the same word and act in which he comes to us in our sin.—

Thus is this problem solved; but only when we compare the long-drawn out denunciation as recorded in the 23rd chapter of Matthew with the few words of Mark 12:36-40 and observe the aim of the author to make his own estimate of the way Jesus opposed the bigotry of the Pharisees. We have to dig down through it all to get at the facts in harmony with Jesus' life and with all human experience. It is the little man, not the great soul, that makes whips and pronounces woes. Truly enough this method of search for raw materials "cuts away and trims away and casts aside so much of the writings," but it reveals the great heart of Jesus. Truly enough, it puts one all out at sea in reading the Bible, but he is not left a derelict or as one clinging to a mast of a sunken ship, but calmly sailing the sea in a stout boat and master of wind and wave.

Now I believe these are sufficient illustrations of the historian's method of getting at the facts. We might go on in this chapter, analysing the chief subjects such as "The Question About Divorce"; "The Pearl of Riches"; "The Reward of Self-sacrifice"; "The Laborers in the Vineyard." But the purpose of this chapter does not require it.

## CHAPTER III.

### Birth and Childhood of Jesus

#### (a) GENEALOGY

**B**EFORE the story of the birth of Jesus comes the genealogy. Of this, several things are to be noted. It is evidently, as also the one in Luke, not a transcript of genealogical records. It is quite artificial, especially in its three divisions of fourteen generations. It is hard to see why fourteen generations in the first section cover a thousand years or more, in the second about four hundred years and in the third 586 years. Also, his purpose is not clear in mentioning the four ignoble women, Tamar, Rahab, Ruth and Bath-Sheba. Maybe it is to teach that God can use such even in the ancestry of his Son. However that may be, do our best, we cannot give much value to this genealogy. We would lose little or nothing if it had been omitted.

Royal lineage in flesh and blood, whatever its effect on the Jews in their Messianic hopes, counts for naught with us today. We readily place it all with the genealogical myths of all religions. Further, when this is considered in connection with the story of the virgin birth following, it is again at odds. This is called "the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David the son of Abraham." And this is traced through Joseph and

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not Mary. Unwittingly, the author actually militates for Joseph as the father of Jesus. Indeed, according to Allen of the *International Critical Commentary*, vs. 16 reads "Joseph . . . begat Jesus." Much the same inaccuracies are to be observed in the genealogy given in Luke. It also traces through Joseph and much more definitely, if a peculiar and strangely obtrusive parenthetical expression is omitted. Both genealogies seem to me, whether so intended or not, to work for the natural birth of Jesus with Joseph and Mary his father and mother, and a noble and kingly ancestry back to the founder of the Hebrew race and to God. In this way they account for the greatness and divinity of Jesus.

### (b) VIRGIN BIRTH.

Then follows the story of the virgin birth, the Holy Spirit taking the place of Joseph in the conception of Jesus. In this way he is made to be in flesh also the Son of God. This seems to be beyond question the purpose of the story in Matthew. However, the story in Luke, if two phrases which seem to be interpolations are omitted, does not exclude Joseph as the natural father of Jesus. Luke also states in chap. 2:33, "his father and his mother were marveling at the things which were spoken concerning him." Would they marvel, if they had known his miraculous conception? Also (chap. 2:41, 48), "His parents went every year to Jerusalem," and "Thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing." (Chap. 4:23). The people say, "Is not

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this Joseph's son?" In Matthew 13:55,56 this same common notion is not corrected by Jesus but accepted. "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And his brethren, James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us?"

In John 1:45, Philip says, "Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Also chap. 6:42 shows the common view. Furthermore, Mark holds that Jesus is first conscious of divine Sonship at his baptism. These side references to Jesus seem to place him in the family with the usual natural connections and kinships. They seem a little odd in the light of the story we are considering. They at least give rise to a larger investigation before we can get the full historical picture so definitely drawn by our author. Matthew and Luke themselves, by the very stories they relate, raise the question as to the reality of the miraculous conception of Jesus.

Before we explain and compare, let us consider other matters connected with these two stories. All the New Testament writers in word and thought consider Jesus as the Son of God. Yet not one aside from these two mentions a virgin birth. And these two writers, strange to note, do not use the story as a basis of argument for Jesus as the Son of God. That is done by the theologians only. Also, it does not appear to be known or spoken of among the early disciples. And Mary and Joseph are silent. In Matthew the fact is divinely revealed to Joseph. In Luke it comes by the angel

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Gabriel to Mary. Surely they both were duty bound to make this fact plain to all. To keep such a fact in their own hearts under the circumstances is hard to defend. And yet this story presupposes the report of the fact by one or both. This all seems strange. Why this silence? With some it may be accounted for and discounted. But with Jesus it is quite significant. With Mary, there is no excuse of "feminine modesty." With John and the purpose of writing the Fourth Gospel, it is fatal. With Paul in his arguments as to the person of Jesus it is inexcusable. Also Paul is the first writer of the New Testament. And he actually declares for a natural conception and a holy life as the explanation of Jesus as God incarnate. Romans 1:3, 4, "born of the seed of David according to the flesh, declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness." Also Acts 13:23; "Of this man's seed hath God according to promise brought unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus."

Arguments from silence of course depend on conditions for their value. If true and of value declared to be in determining the divinity of Jesus, this silence is significant in every case and decisive in at least five; Mary and Joseph, Jesus and John and Paul. This universal silence makes this story not the simple record of a fact from which one may reason, but the endeavor to explain and establish another fact, viz., the unique goodness and power of Jesus. Such a conclusion is not far fetched. It is demanded. The things

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said and the things not said in connection with the continued use of the phrase "Son of God" make these stories not unquestioned fact but purposed explanation. Are they a true explanation? This question is inevitable. Each thinking person must answer it. \*

To answer it, we should view the account both in the light of the life of the time and in connection with our modern, more Christian life. And first, the Hebrew and Oriental background.

Wholesale corruption of the physical life was a fundamental conviction of Hebrew thought. It was not of any one class such as the intellectuals; but of all classes. There was a complete duality of flesh and spirit. Man originally pure had fallen into sin. Thereby he was totally depraved. From the smallest to the greatest this notion was unquestioned. Even today it is supreme in the oriental mind. Total depravity such as is set forth in Genesis was the thought of all. The Indian idealism which made this fleshly life a thing to be despised because impure was everywhere in the East. The flesh and the spirit were at war with each other. Existence in the pure spirit alone was the heaven to be desired. Out of a sinful race could come no pure life. I simply state this fact. It needs no argument. And mark, too, it is a religious conception.

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\*That we are taking no new course today in dealing with this question in our own original way is the fact that it has always been a subject of controversy; some parties accepting it as a basic fact and others not accepting it as such, and still others ignoring its value if a fact, in establishing the divinity of Jesus. Such was the case with the first general council of the Christian church at Nicea A. D. 325. There with great definiteness and accuracy, it is stated that Jesus is "begotten of the Father," "begotten, not made," and "being of one substance with the Father." But never once is the virgin birth referred to as a basis for that oneness with God.



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Furthermore, the function of physical life to which this notion attached most of corruption was that of reproduction. The conception and birth of a child was an impure thing, base and ignoble. The grand passion which Christian thought and sentiment make the greatest experience of life in every way, was a thing to be ashamed of. Witness the chastity and celibacy of the priest or holy man. While the prenatal days of the mother and her bringing forth a new born child, that function of womanhood which Christian thought has exalted to the highest, making it almost divine, was thought to be a time of great impurity. This, too, was all a matter of religious thought and sentiment. Motherhood and the love of a man and a woman has always had its poetry. But it has been "a fall in love." Sin seems to contaminate it all. It was not the "holy estate" of man and woman, it was a weakness, especially so the kiss and love's embrace viewed purely as a physical expression. It becomes a holy relation only in Christian thought and experience. Then we have the Madonna. Then the mother looks on her babe as a gift from God,—yea more—the father and mother both rejoice in the creative act with God. But what shame that the unchristian world drives the expectant mother to the jungle to bring forth her child. Yet such was the case. Here, again, I simply state the fact. Its significance cannot be overestimated. Jesus must not inherit human depravity. Yet is femaleness

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less sinful than maleness? O, well, the immaculate conception of Mary helps very much right there.

Still further, the first born child was *the* child in the family. He received the inheritance and princely rank. The others seemed of small importance. This bit of foolishness, like the divine right of kings, is not yet entirely out of human thought. That, too, in spite of such notable examples as Joseph and David; and such great men as Benjamin Franklin and John Wesley, each the fifteenth child in the family, and the great-souled Susanna Wesley, the twenty-fourth child in the family. First-born children, I fear, cannot hold their superior special privilege in history. Yet the peculiar favor shown them is a fact of all time. I simply state it. And now come two other facts of importance here: divine births and miraculous events in connection with all remarkable lives. Many kings are of divine conception or birth or both. So, too, with prophets and great leaders. Some remarkable or miraculous thing, setting forth a peculiar and unusual divine activity in connection with the birth of a king, leader or prophet, seemed to be almost an absolute necessity in ancient times. The story of the virgin birth of Jesus is not alone in ancient biography.\*

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\*The ancient mystery religions which experienced a wonderful growth during the centuries of the origin of Christianity used every possible human relationship to set forth divine human communion. One of their chief ceremonies was the religious marriage or copulation with deity. The holy marriage was the literal act of synousia with deity through his priests or phallos or otherwise. Plutarch states that the Egyptians believed "it is not impossible for the Spirit of God to have intercourse with a woman." All which makes it perfectly natural that Christians, steeped in such thinking, should set forth the story of the virgin birth of Jesus. The same connection is to be observed in the religious conceptions of suffering with God, resurrection with God, feeding on God, contemplation and adoration of God and immortality with God.

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Being thus born, these great and good men must be able to do signs and wonders to attest their divinity. In this, too, Jesus is not alone. Would that he were. We would have greater assurance in some things told of him. But he is not. All prophets and leaders perform wonders. This, again, is simply the fact.

Again, of no small importance, is the modification of the deeds and teaching by succeeding ages. This corruption by the disciples, of the records, is universal. All is seen from their own viewpoint. And therefore, a body of traditional stories arises about a prophet hiding his real personal activity. It was so with Gautama as it was with Jesus and Socrates and Moses. And it is all the more so with men who do not leave us a little of their thought and life in written form. Not having a stenographer's report of the events or an autobiography, we are left to this issue. It makes it so that each age must write its own history; interpreting life in all of its phases in accord with human experience. And it is becoming more and more evident that each age can write the record better than the preceding one. We today can tell better, with the ever increasing records what went on in the early days of the human race, than the historians of those days or of any age since. We have greater abilities and better eyes with which to see, and we actually see more and clearer. We must always keep in mind, when we read, these modifications of time and the author's abilities

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and viewpoint. This is an old saying. But it is a fact and worthy of all acceptance.

In connection with this, as a corollary, is to be noted the fact that every good man and every prophet, and so the records of the same, is not destroyed by one or two faults or misconceptions, or by a wholesale modification to conform to local conditions. Indeed such things actually make the life more real. It is not an uncommon thing to find great religious zeal in connection with false notions or teachings. The crusades are a classic instance of this in Christianity. And the many absurd heathen practices that prove false in later times and are sloughed off. Because this story of the virgin birth has been held so universally in the church through the ages it is not therefore secure. Other things must decide its reality, such as its moral and spiritual worth and social implications. When the contentions, arguments and ill feelings this story has aroused in religious thinking are considered, its spiritual value to Christianity is rightly questioned. It is a fine thing to distinguish these faults and not make them a test of faith. And it might be well to call the attention of those zealous in the defence of this story as a test of faith that nowhere in the New Testament is it made to be such a test.

A final matter of great importance is the proper understanding of the phrase "Son of God" and "Only Begotten Son of God." What does this mean? Is it a literal, scientific expression or a metaphor? Is it

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applied only to physical relations between men and God or to both physical and spiritual? Is it of Jesus alone or of Jesus and all men? Is it of the physical origin of Jesus in a unique sense or of both his physical and spiritual origin in a unique sense? These questions lead us into a large investigation, too large for this chapter and not necessary. Suffice it to state only the conclusion. What was at first used in religion as a literal statement, became, by New Testament times, a spiritual metaphor. What is the most blessed and natural human relationship becomes the best possible picture of the divine human spirit relationship. Jesus so used it. The New Testament writers so used it. And it is to be so used here.

Now living in such a thought world, it is not strange but natural that such a story as the virgin birth should arise. Many would naturally explain the remarkable life of Jesus in this way. How such a man came into the world and how he went out were two great problems for philosophy. They were debated for many years after Jesus lived, as history shows. They will be debated again. They will be solved by every age in its own forms of thought. How God in his relation to men and the world was conceived by the philosophic thought of that time is what determined the form of this account of the origin of Jesus. Change the philosophy and a new account of his origin arises. The date and place of birth of Jesus were not definitely known by the gospel writers. All was as uncertain

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as the conditions. In their thought was the compelling conception of the Messiah. Jesus must be established as such. How natural that the uncertain myths and traditions created in the childhood of the race should be called forth and made to gather about the origin of Jesus in the stories recorded. They had little of our scientific mind. These old stories were still of great weight with all. Divine self-revelation was sexually conceived in all the mystery religions. Therefore such conceptions are made use of, and wisely so.

But with us today it is different. We are able not only to think the matter out more clearly but also to understand the psychological processes that made possible their accounts. Having done that, we can free ourselves from these things as historic facts, place them where they belong in psychic life and set forth our own account truer to experience. With us today, as has been pointed out, with many of that time, there is no difficulty in conceiving the divinity of Jesus in connection with the usual physical birth of men. Our thinking makes such an explanation possible and requires it. It clears the way, too for the explanation of the origin of divinity in every man. God can come into all human life.

### (c) THE LARGER EXPLANATION OF THE ORIGIN OF JESUS.

This whole problem is how to explain Jesus. The third great epoch in religion begins with him. In the first, religion was a confused reaching out after God



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with very little moral worth. In the second, the prophets, especially the Hebrew prophets, moralize their religion. God is best worshipped in righteous living. Then came Jesus, who reveals the moral life of love and trust as the supreme human and divine fellowship. In him, the human race becomes conscious of an intimate and blessed fellowship with God the Father, so that we have a new and enlarged human personality, a new epoch of life. This is all kept, too, in the same moral realm of human relations. How, now, explain the origin of this man Jesus, the originator of this larger life? Having observed the life out of which came the explanation of the early Christian thinkers, let us state briefly our own basic thinking and our explanation.

There are three theories of the origin of the soul to which I desire to call attention. One is that of transmigration or reincarnation of the personality. This is the ancient notion of the Orient. It is not very definitely conceived. The particular animal form is not determined. On the death of a man, his soul may pass into some beast of the field, and exist in many such habitations before coming again to human flesh. And the soul now animating human flesh may have had ages on ages of dwelling in other animals. With this notion we do not need to stop long, nor think it out in all its details.

The second theory is that of momentary creation, direct from God at the time of birth or conception,

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God makes a human body and breathes into it a living spirit. Most often this is thought to take place at the time of birth. And when we die, the soul returns to the presence of God who gave it. This is the conception of Hebrew thought and of most people called Christian. It is simple and large and largely true as far as it goes. It maintains a distinct and eternal personality for each human being. It makes God creator and in continual fellowship with his creatures; though residing far off in his heavenly home to which we all go at death. Its form of momentary and individualistic creation, each person distinct and unrelated, does not answer for present thought. Evolutionary thought has brought forth new problems which require a very much more accurate and different account of the origin of the soul. Coming from God and going to God is more than most Christians think it is.

The third view roots in the evolutionary conception of God and his world. We must bring Him into this world very much as our spirits live in our bodily forms. He is not related to it even by any chain of secondary causes back to Him as first cause. He is here abutting on all of it and living in the present without past or future as men conceive temporal relations. Not only so, but He is a living God with all of growth that living implies. His world is larger than it once was because He is larger. His activity takes the form we discover at any moment of the world. The universe is just our name for his personal activity. In that, including our-

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selves, He is manifest or revealed to the human personality.

The physical world is not a big mass or lump of dead created stuff. We are beginning to see, not only that it is ever changing and ceaselessly active, but that its very nature is nothing apart from spirit. When the spirit ceases to act or will there is nothing left as a residuum or ashes that will change of itself into something else. There is no dust to go to dust or earth to earth; the spirit having withdrawn from something it has been using and cares to use no longer. That is not a true explanation of God and his world. There is not that kind of duality. Long as his arm may be it is not that long. He makes nothing and then uses it. He acts and things are. He ceases to act and things are not. We may discover Him active in another form if we keep up with Him. That is the only way we will be aware of Him—find Him at work. He does not create a physical human body, fully developed, and then put a soul into it. We see beyond all doubt that the physical body is not yet a finished product. Neither is the soul or spirit a finished product.

God's activity in human things when compared with that in ages gone by shows an unfolding or development or improvement. Progress is its nature. His economy is balanced. No part gets ahead of any other part and then waits for that part behind to catch up. The soul is in continuous process of generation. There is an evolution of personality in all its moral

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and spiritual activity the same as there is of our physical bodies. It runs parallel to it. Or rather our bodies are the manifestation of our soul activity at each moment of our lives. The soul of a baby is not full grown, as that of an adult. Such a conception of personality is false. It is not in harmony with the rest of divine activity. Its coming and going from heaven to heaven is not a momentary act. Indeed heaven all at once proves to be a form of activity—God at work and men working with Him.

So it is not a soul created separate from the body and put into it. It is a soul active and developing in its activity. All which at one period manifests its growing activity in what we discover is the human being at that moment, body and mind and all. We think it all in time and space relations as though the spirit picked up some stuff called matter and made it into a body and then in the end left that body a dead thing. What we should think is, that the soul activity has taken another form in God's world. As we think of the world as a great activity of God we finally get the conception, from his manifestations, of the personality of God as ceaseless activity. And so we come to think of human personality in terms of activity. As the activity is evolutionary so is the personality. This is how we think it today.

Now this being so, the origin of the Son of God is a very different matter from the announcement of the angel Gabriel to Mary and the momentary overshadow-

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owing of the Holy Spirit. Jesus dying on the cross was not in that overshadowing or in the babe lying in the manger, potentially or any other way. That was only the beginning of his personality. His consciousness of God as his Father in the garden of Gethsemane did not burst upon him all at once, especially not at the moment of baptism. It was a growing consciousness. At twelve he showed it in a large measure. His unwavering trust of the Father was a thing of development. Can we not get away from the concept of personality, either human or divine, as a thing static, cold, finished, distant, unapproachable, hidden in flesh and perfect from the first? That is a conception of a living thing which is anything and everything but life. The soul, the spirit, the personality is life with all that we mean by life. God is life and his Son is life. He came to earth the way life comes, the way divine life comes. Jesus lived himself into human life, into holy life, into divine activity and eternal divine activity.

Again, what is our conception of sin? Will it not be anything that interferes with or destroys life, all life and every kind of life? So if we conceive men and women as living personalities, struggling out into larger and larger life manifest in flesh ways, sin becomes anything that interferes with that life and its relations. Duality of flesh and spirit are gone. The highest good is not a static thing and perfect, but normal growth, natural development. We look at a tree and observe the signs of a normal healthy life and

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that is its highest good. So with each person. If he is growing, he is pure, sanctified, holy and perfect. All thought of salvation as a single momentary transformation is gone. We do not think of Jesus as being sent into the world that way. God so loved the world that He sent his Son to grow into all human relations, into all human society, to become a vital part of human life, to live himself into life, inspiring it. He came to be an abundant life in it all. And we hardly permitted his doing it before we brought him to a tragic end. That is our sin, destroying life, losing faith, breaking vital relations between personalities. If Jesus can save us from this kind of depravity it will be very good indeed. It will be a living salvation, the Saviour living us into a larger life. He comes giving us a righteousness of love and trust that is more than the righteousness we have known. And, mark you, Mary came to understand him only when at the last she caught the meaning of his doing the will of the Father. Then only did she cease marveling and come to know that he was divine. Moral and spiritual values need no outside authority to set them forth as real, especially not a materialistic authority. They are their own evidence and support. The evidence and explanation of Jesus is his life powers, what he is and did, made real in Palestine and the world since, even to this moment. What a salvation has come to men.

“But O, the poetry of the virgin birth. What a wonderful thing this is. So beautiful. Madonna and child



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alone and unique.”—Is that so? Let us see. Every Jewish woman hoped to be the mother of the Messiah. Who would be the favored of the Lord? That her child would save Israel from her sins, from her slavery. Israel has sinned and Jehovah has given her over to her enemies. One will come to redeem her. A child will be born, Immanuel. What a hope to inspire a woman to pray for such a divine favor.—But the flesh is so corrupt, so base and ignoble. Hope dashed to despair. This thing conceived and born, especially since it is not my first-born child, cannot be that holy child. It must be divinely, miraculously born. Chastity and virginity alone are worthy of such. Only some divinely favored daughter in Israel will be that mother. We will sing her praises forever, just one Madonna and Child. But no praise for the natural, healthy baby boy, his mother and father and their love. Just one holy. All the rest corrupt. That may be poetry. But it is not the poetry every mother and father has the right to imagine and what all the world needs.

I sing of the blessed and holy, pure love of a man and a woman, all men and women sincerely in love; of the kiss and love's embrace, the grand passion of the soul; of babies coming from God, the sixth-born as well as the first; of homes and the family with children playing and growing into manhood and womanhood, not one only a divine saviour of men, but all sons and daughters of God. That is the poetry we need for men

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and women. That is the sacredness of childhood and love which Jesus taught. That is the holy estate of life which divinity loves to honor and into which Jesus came. Baby boys and girls innocent in childhood and no purer in virginity with all its many fancies, uncertain, fearful emotions and attempts and failures at mating, its stormy time of uncontrolled sex-uproaring—no purer is life then, indeed not so pure is virginity as when life has come to ripened fruitage, all uncertainty and deception are gone, man has found his mate and two hearts are one for life in a sincere and holy love for each other. The pure estate of life is not virginity but matrimony.

I believe I have had my share of the pleasures of life that are worth while. I know what it is to have fun as a boy, just using up physical energy. I know the excitement of the game and victory in the contest as well as defeat. I have thrilled, too, in the mental struggles of school days and have had a taste of achievement in the affairs of men. I remember the joys of a thirteen-year-old love and its cruel wreckage. I have dared and been bold and cowardly by turns in the uncertain affections of youth. I have taken my girl to the lecture and concert. I have been, O, so sadly disappointed in love—and that was fun too. I have stayed too late, entirely too late. I have stolen my first kiss amid the most absurd sham opposition. I know all about it. You can't tell me anything. I have

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even kissed a diamond ring on the finger of my betrothed.

I have lost myself with my love in the depths of God's richest palace of the August woods of Maine; roofed with its dense forest shade, carpeted with pine needles and thick moss and alive with saucy squirrels and singing birds—the most wonderful palace of love in all the world. There we told our love stories and sang our lives together while time was forgotten and the forest talked to us. Some day we will see again that sacred place where our love was plighted. I know the joys of that day and going away with sweet kisses on my lips and my head knocking the stars. No one can tell me anything about it.

I was as foolish, too, as all men, I suppose, on my wedding day. The joy of the great discovery in love's embrace was mine. I know all about the sweets of the honeymoon. No one can tell me more. I have had my share of the pleasure and joys of life's experiences as they come. But the fun of all fun, the pleasure of all pleasures, the joy unspeakable and full of glory, the time when heaven came down and kissed my soul, when I laughed and cried, too happy to sing and too glad to notice my friends or to think of God, was when I held my own baby girl in my hands and looked into her face for the first time. That was the climax of fun, boys. That was everlasting and eternal bliss that does not fade out with the coming of years. That is what it means to me to grow up in a good home and love

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and found a home all our own. If there is anything better in this world than that I do not know it.

O, I have not told you half. For there was prayer on that wedding day. There was divine communion in our love. It was God's will all along. There was no shame. It was two souls as one. Our child was conceived in love and born in faith. Through the days before we held her in our arms, I helped. We both willed and watched and waited and created together. Wife got her strength from me, too. And her suffering and labor were mine also. It takes two to give birth to a child, yea three, even God with us, to labor together that another soul may live. It was a great spiritual struggle. The finest soul energy we had went into the task and kept going for years of infancy and even to womanhood.—And then, and then, and *then*, some one tells me the best baby boy ever born was born some other way. That God's blessed, holy, pure way is not divine after all. That he ate and slept and grew, worked and played, thought and hoped and trusted and loved as all of us do, except he was born differently.—Doubting, materialistic, earth-born creature! Away with him! He would destroy both the faith of men and the love of God. He wants God to disregard half the process of the first act of creation, take a condition of reproduction that at best is only half and bring forth his Son. He steps out of human experience and tells us about something which we cannot experience and he cannot experience and cannot know.

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He describes in detail what he does not know, and then he supports his assertions with a few traditions and reasons based thereon. The shame of it all in the presence of love and children and God.

If God is purposed to "make his Word become flesh," is He ashamed to "overshadow" his own creative work? Is that divine activity par-excellence? Why may not his "overshadowing" come in the midst of his own established ways of creating? What is to hinder? Cannot the incarnation of God go on in the way in which a little of divinity is already coming and which we understand?—go on to its fullest realization? And when it does, sentiments and actions are not outraged and torn asunder, but this process or function of human and divine creative activity is honored and exalted till every father and mother can rejoice in the presence of their child as the supreme creation of God.

## CHAPTER IV.

### The Temptation of Jesus

MATTHEW 4:1-11

THE second chapter of Matthew begins very much as though it were the beginning of the book. The first chapter looks much like an after thought. This may be so. However it is, this chapter gives us five beautiful and wonderful stories of the infancy of Jesus. In these our interest is not "facts" but poetry. The author makes each incident done to fulfill Old Testament scripture. Born in Bethlehem, worshipped by the Magi, fled into Egypt, hated by the king in the slaughter of the infants, returning and living in Nazareth—all done to keep true to Old Testament statements. What a human fancy is satisfied by this fortune-telling elevated into the divine revealing of future events.

The third chapter tells of Jesus in his relation to John and the Old Testament prophets, and to the organized and ceremonial religion of his time. Considerable interest is aroused by this record. Yet on it cannot be based a defense of ceremonialism as sanctioned by Jesus. When the sum total of the teachings of Jesus is considered there is good reason to conclude that Jesus expected ceremonialism to have less and less



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place in religion and to give place finally to the spirit and the truth. And while vital spiritual connection with the Old Testament prophets is the aim of the story of John the Baptist and Jesus, this formal putting of the matter does not help much. We see that connection better by a simple comparison of the living activities of both. Propaganda writings are a poor vehicle for such connection.

What now, is the conclusion of the matter in the first three chapters of this book? The great thing is not the question of historical accuracy. This may be very small. The time, place and circumstances of the birth of Jesus are all uncertain. Nor is it the moral and spiritual lessons we may draw from them by letting our imagination make concrete the things found. Neither is it the author's first step in his aim to establish Jesus as the Messiah of Old Testament prophecy. These matters all become of small importance in the presence of the great outstanding fact that a person lived who so moved men to write such things of his conception, birth, childhood and introduction to his lifework. Surely something has happened. Before we read further we know this is no common man. Indeed, the record of men's lives begins anew with his birthday. It is year one, day one. Some one of marvelous power and life has broken into human life and turned men's minds so that they leap beyond themselves in vain efforts to tell of him. To write a coherent, logical story of a man's origin and early life is not

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a difficult task. But when all reason, logic, consistency and judgment are found so confused and lacking in this common undertaking, there is only one conclusion, and that is, that the subject of the writing is too great for human records. Men stagger at the task, and their confusion is the best possible record. However, we are glad to come to things more real in the records of Jesus.

### (a) THE TEMPTATION—A REAL EXPERIENCE.

The most important event in what is called the preparation of Jesus for his ministry is the deep experience set forth in the account of his temptation. This experience is universal, vital and unchanging. In this account we see the real Jesus. In his temptation he goes the way of all human beings. In a real way he attains moral and spiritual developments through personal choice of the good against the evil. Here, as many times in his life, he meets the test, a real test, saves himself from the evil, gains the victory and is true to the Father's will. Holding the true course, his strength is increased.

As there can be no character in men if there is no moral and spiritual choice, so there could be none with Jesus. "He hath been, in all points, tempted like as we are." "In that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." The only way he could save men was to live their life. He was not at the beginning of his earthly life, in personal character the true saviour of men. He

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grew into that character; had a real true spiritual development in real human relations and life.

Nothing can be more misleading than to make the divinity of Jesus rest on anything other than real spiritual living as a man among men. He must earn his place of spiritual leadership. Any other course makes Jesus' life unreal and unhuman, without point of contact with us. His life is lived before he begins it. He needs no test. Such a thing would be superfluous. Already holy, he simply does and says great things in our midst. We look on with wonder at it all, but untouched. Being God, he ought to do it. If he has no babyhood in moral and spiritual things, he is not one of us, cannot succor us in our development and cannot save us. But if he comes into this world as all of us do, grows up and lives the natural life, meets all the tests men meet, then we do not stand amazed and wonder. We see his life has a real growth as has ours. We draw nigh. We come and are saved. Then we recognize his divinity. The man who leads men and charms them is the one who lives their life in a real sense—not as a social experimenter—yet refrains from the sins they commit. So, too, the divinity that saves humanity is the divinity that is human, not the divinity that is disguised as a man and has gone slumming.

In a living and concrete form, this narrative gives us a cross section of the life of Jesus. It does not take place once and no more. It is his life repeated as often

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as he wills. A hundred times before and a hundred times after the experience here recorded, he meets a test, makes choice and wills accordingly. It is one continuous test, personal choice and will—that is his life. That is the salvation he brings.

### (b) FORM AND CONTENT.

To see this in the record before us, we need to distinguish the form from the content and that in a way quite thorough-going. The author's view point, theology and preconceptions must be noted. He wants his readers to see in Jesus the Christ of Old Testament prophecy; to see how he is supported in his tests by the word of those men. Three times he turns aside the evil by, "It is written." In place of the ancient writings coming to naught, they are ready at hand to save him. They and Jesus are wedded. Then, too, the forty days, the desert, the pinnacle of the temple, the mountain-top; the devil and the angels come to minister—all these so concrete and vivid are the thought forms of the time. Let us not be misled by them. They are not the important matters. We are not concerned whether or not the Old Testament writings forecast this experience. We already know that all good men are akin. The writing does not make it so. It does not affect the case at all. It is not necessary to bind ourselves to this record even as to essentials.

An exposition should not aim to maintain a writing inviolable. Jesus and human experience are the ulti-

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mate things to be set forth. Begin with them and end with them. With them see the writing and through it. Drop the concrete metaphors, though they seem so real. Forget what the author has specifically in mind. Away from the local, let us find the universal and eternal that can live again in us and all men.

### (c) STONES TO BREAD—MATERIALISM.

This is not the temptation of a child. This belongs to strong manhood. He is conscious of much moral power and desires recognition as the center and head of the Kingdom of God. It is the very nature of power to rise to leadership. Power and organization belong together. Inevitably they will come together. And this test of Jesus, threefold set forth, is the adjusting and relating of those two things—in the proper way or the evil way. The right way is an eternal evolutionary process. The wrong way is a temporal, authoritative surface expedient, seemingly well done but futile and resulting in confusion and sin. Which course will he take?

“If you are what you are conscious of being, lay hold of these material things. Turn these stones to bread. At once your authority among men is secure, unlimited. Act not on the basis of spiritual principles, and make material things dependent upon them. But make material things bolster up and hasten—the coming establishment of those spiritual things. The material world is a mass of stuff to be used, not a form of activity. Use it to help you, to lift you up. Money

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is to be used. Get it and use it benevolently. You do not surrender your convictions, but retain them. You only make use of material things, changing them into another form that will charm and come back to you with the submission of the people to your spiritual power. When you have made your pile and they thus recognize your superior power, you may drop the work of turning stones to bread and do only benevolent things. It has been an expedient only, a stroke of wisdom. You are still and all along master of the material things. Your spirit never gives up its seat of rulership and power. You only add to your slow leavening of human spirits and awakening of them and calling of their attention to that power and process, by thus manipulating material things. Hasten on the process of growth."—But not so. Such things never aid. They confuse and destroy. They increase the misery they promise to cure.

Again and again this temptation came to him as it comes to us, and as often he turned it aside. How it pained him when the people thus pressed upon him: "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will in no wise believe." They required a sign. "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given it but the sign of Jonah the prophet." Back to the spiritual things of repentance and a Godly life." Ye seek me, not because of the signs, but because ye ate of the loaves, and were filled." Was there ever greater evidence of the failure of this course? It



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failed to bring them to spiritual living. It also failed to establish his authority. It simply fed them. No. He would not listen to it. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." You have a higher life than the bread life, the life in the spirit.

This life feeds on God. Spirit communes with spirit. As it lives it enmeshes itself in material things. But it is always the basis and ground of them. It is never controlled by them or dependent upon them; never developed by them. Let every act of personal will be the act of spiritual and moral convictions without the first thought of material things. They are only the temporal form of life. This is the victory of Jesus by his personal choice. This is his salvation for men.

The minister cultivating his parish often longs for more rapid development. Growth seems slow. He dreams of what money and lands and possessions would do in aiding this development. But it is a dream indeed. Senator Lorimer of Illinois was not content to travel the long way a politician must go in becoming a Senator. Money, properly manipulated, would place him in the senate at once. He could build up his kingdom by the help of bread. Henry Ford saw the World War. He felt the shame and longed for the reign of peace. He not only failed to see the slow leavening spiritual process which brings real and lasting peace, but he also failed to properly understand his own relation to the conflict. He condemns all who

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manufactured cartridges and guns for the armies. But those who furnished rations and shoes and doctors, those who sold horses and automobiles to the armies—their hands are not stained with blood. Above all, those who poured out their benevolence at the rate of eight millions a month—such benevolent creatures are not at all related to the awful carnage, not even indirectly, in his mind.

While the far-seeing, patient men with real spiritual power that makes surely and inevitably for peace were banding together for a world government to insure international peace for a world life grown up in our midst—while they were teaching and sowing seed, preaching and scattering literature that will develop a solid and genuine basis, spiritual peace convictions,—while men were doing this, Henry Ford passed them by hardly aware that they existed, and went on a peace expedition among the nations hoping “to get the boys out of the trenches before Christmas.” Because he has honor and social standing in money and financial things, he could make such a trip and pay the bill for all who went with him. By a simple process of turning autos into ships and provisions for safe passage of all, he expected to move the wills of men. But one thing is spiritual. The other is a material manipulation at the will of the spiritual. Quickly this expedition came to naught. The old spiritual task of peaceful relations of wills is left with us. Henry Ford will need to come back to the old job of faith and prayer and love, ex-

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horting men to the Father's will. A thing which the poorest man can do. And the richest man can do no better because he is rich. Only thus can Henry Ford be saved from despair. Thanks be to God for the salvation He wrought in Jesus, for us all as well as Henry Ford. Personal choice in spiritual convictions and growth thereby.

Furthermore, the whole problem of wealth and its distribution is here suggested. If turning stones to bread can help spiritual things, then to live to make money is right. This becomes the sinews of life as of war. But—men can eat about so much. They can wear a little clothing under what we call civilization. They need a little shelter,—houses and public buildings, in which to live. A little scientific thought soon develops a balanced ration, comfortable clothes and buildings; these all in proper social relations and activities. Undoubtedly the talents and abilities or use needs determine the kind and amount of material things for each person. The physical worker needs the greatest quantity of food; the thinker, the larger library and writing materials; the musician, the best musical instruments; the geologist, the diamonds and pearls and other stones; the farmers, the land; the teachers, the children and the statesmen, the social order, etc., etc. But what a terrible mix-up and confusion has resulted in this, our acquisitive society, this turning of stones into bread.

Like a lot of big selfish boys or greedy hogs we have

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tried to gather into our hands and pockets—civilization invented pockets—all the trinkets of the earth. Instead of conquering the earth and living the spirit life we are lost in seeing how many material things we can acquire. Make money, buy land, get stocks, rule people, pile up knowledge as lumber—this completely destroys our ability to use. It is the basest materialism. It creates poverty and benevolence and ends in war and destruction of both life and property. Turning stones into bread, even in the true sense of agriculture, is not, of itself living with God. One must do it with good purpose to make it so. But dropping agriculture and letting others do that, then by selfish, long-headed Yankee manipulations and special privileges, getting hold of the great wealth of agricultural workers for authority to dominate men and to roll in luxuries—that is ten-fold less the life of God. That is what the devil suggested to Jesus in the moment we are considering.

### (d) GAMBLE WITH LAWS—MATERIALISM.

“Well you are short-sighted in this way. Maybe you will see your chance from another view-point. Cast yourself down from this pinnacle. The angels will bear you up. You will not be dashed to pieces. What a spectacle for the people. Falling to earth yet not crushed. Seeing that, all men will listen to any beatitude, obey any command, rely on any promise, trust you completely, do the will of your Father. No doubt then about your being the master in spiritual things.

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You will be supreme. Show your power in spiritual life not by breaking your spiritual convictions but by manifesting a superiority to material laws. Risk it. You can command a special privilege, a man of your ability and standing with the Father. God will care for you in the crisis."

But not so. "I will not break my relations with the Father. I will not fly in his face. I will not shift the task before me to his shoulders by such violent disregard of living conditions here on earth. Neither will it aid me or result as you say. If material things properly handled are futile, all the more is the reckless disregard of the nature and laws of material things. This means ruin as swiftly and violently as it promises success. Far from a desire to test or disregard the constancy and trustworthiness of the nature of things, that very constancy is my underlying spiritual principle. On it I am building. No. No. I will not forsake it."

How many go down on this rock. Broken health of men in the professions, squandered fortunes of men in business, ruined homes of men and women who dared to divide their love; all testify to the attempt to gamble with God's laws.

### (e) BREAK WITH THE FATHER—MATERIALISM.

The third phase of this temptation is weaker than the second, as the second is weaker than the first. The devil never rises to a climax. He never reserves his big guns for the last. In his effort to hide his main purpose he brings forth what to him is only a small

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variation from the true course. Then each succeeding temptation must be a larger variation. But this is unfortunate in two ways. First, the power of a temptation on the person tempted is strong only as it presents a course which at first only slightly varies from the true course. The more it comes to be at right angles with the true course the less is its power. In the same way, the greater the variation from the true course, the more obvious is both the purpose of the tempter and his satanic nature. In attempting to confuse, he is thrown into confusion. Till devil that he is, men see him, spurn him, rebuke him, cast him out. The last thing he can say is the bare-faced lie: "Fall down and worship me and I will give the kingdoms into your hands." And the only answer is: "Get thee hence, Satan: Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

Big fool! He does not have the kingdoms of this earth and so cannot give them. He did not show in panorama before the eye the spiritual kingdom Jesus purposed to rule. He showed earthly kingdoms, which were of no concern to Jesus.

And now we understand him. He speaks plainly, the groveling, dead, materialistic beast! He means to forsake the spiritual and moral world entirely and wallow in the mud. That was his aim from the first. To use material things to support or aid spiritual things is to become a materialist. To utterly disregard the nature of material things is to deny the only spirit-



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ual element in them. The only explanation that is spiritual is gone. And a second time we are materialists. These two phases of the temptation are as much a surrender to materialism as the last where Jesus is asked point blank to trade his spiritual kingdom for the material kingdoms.

Furthermore, we now see the true nature of temptation in its deepest significance. It is a question of worship of God the Father. What is the spirit life? What is materialism? These terms have been used all along in the reasoning so far. But after all we are driven from laws to persons. Will Jesus break with the Father? To become a materialist is to lose faith in the Father. This is the background of all this account. "If thou art the Son of God," is the carefully veiled personal attack thrice repeated. "Of course I think you are." But why is this mentioned so casually? Is it not all the more subtly to lead up to the bold demand of the real big thing in the end? "Break with God and worship me."

The big sin is to break the bond of personal trust. Here comes out what becomes the supreme experience of Jesus in Gethsemane. Just now the big thing of this personal trust between the Son and the Father is the ministry or service Jesus is to do. He is beginning to work. In Gethsemane it is the breaking off in the midst of that work that causes him to hesitate and doubt the Father's love. In both cases, the choice is a choice of personal fellowship, a determination to re-

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main true to the one above all others. It is all a matter of personal relations in the bonds of faith, trust, belief. Breaking this is sin. Keeping it is life. It is not only life for Jesus, it is also the saving power of God coming to him and aiding in the choice. The divine work is wrought in him in this way. In the same way Jesus becomes our salvation in our fellowship with him. The trust between the Father and Son is the same as that between Jesus and us. Is not the same salvation, therefore the same for Jesus as for us? Does it not work in the same way bringing us to the Father?

Indeed we do well at this initial moment to pray for Jesus as we do for ourselves. Will Jesus go on as he has started: living with the Father till that living takes on its true nature; unfolding, growing, developing in its own true way? Or will he cut it short by some expedient or substitute? That was the continual temptation before him, from the manger to the cross. That was the moral and spiritual test he met a thousand times and thanks be to God the Father conquered a thousand times. That is the continual, living, personal choice which made Jesus the head of the kingdom of God. That is the salvation he brought to men. That is the divinity of Jesus, given to men, in human life, the new birth and regeneration of it.

### (f) THE SHOUT OF VICTORY.

No wonder the devil left him and angels came and ministered unto him. It could not be different. It will be so with us. Do we want the ministering angels?

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Make the continual personal choice that Jesus made. That is the absolute prelude. Always on Christmas week, Handel's Oratorio, "The Messiah," is sung by magnificent choruses. It is wonderful, all of it. But the climax is best of all. When it comes to the Hallelujah Chorus, all the singers rise. The great audience rises also and stands while they sing.—O, it is wonderful! The angels gather about. But it would not be so if there had not preceded it the trials and groans and upheavals of all creation. That was absolutely necessary. That made possible the climax, the Hallelujah Chorus. Without that there could have been no bursting shout. Without that the Chorus would have lost its power.

Will we pay the price? We want the glory of Apomatox, but will we go through the four years of blood and war? We are praying for world peace and a world mind and government. But are we willing to go through the world upheaval? Bloodshed, crumbling cathedrals and the destruction of autocratic governments? Are we willing to grow, in long patient years, the democratic and brotherly mind? These go before the magnificent gathering of the nations in a world government. We want the glory and power of the cross. But are we willing to make the personal choice? That is the power of the cross, the living salvation.

(g) HOW SAVES US—ONCE MORE.

How does this continual choice of right in the moral

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judgments of Jesus save us in the midst of our moral judgments?

A lad was directed by his mother to play on the lawn during the afternoon and not to go down to the beach. But the lawn was dull and his playmates called from the beach to join them in wading. Their invitation was strong and he finally walked down to the gate and began to toy with the latch. Then with firm-set lips and hands clasped tight behind him, he slowly returned to the veranda.

Again he went to the gate. This time he opened it a little, but instead of passing through, he closed it sharply, and once more made his way back to the veranda.

But it was hot and lonely and stupid there. On the cool beach the children were having a merry time. He bore it as long as he could, and then, running swiftly down the path, opened the gate and scampered off to join his companions.

It was tea time when he returned, and his mother met him with uplifted finger and reproving look. "Ah, Rodney, Rodney, you have disobeyed me. You have been at the beach. Now I want to tell you that I saw you all the time; going twice to the gate and then the third time through it."

"You watched me the whole time?" finally ventured Rodney.

"Yes," answered his mother, wondering.

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"And you saw me go down and come back again?" he continued.

"I did," she replied, more perplexed than ever.

"Then, mother," he asked, bravely, although the little lips trembled, "Why didn't you tap on the window pane and help a fellow?" \*

That mother was more interested in bringing her boy to judgment than in helping him through to a decided personal choice of the right. There was no mysterious sympathy of soul struggles. That powerful touch of living souls in common experience was gone. Not so Jesus. He came not to judge but to live. He knows all about it and he helps. Come to him. He went through it all and came out strong and true, and stands trusting the Father. He can, therefore, help us do the same. Indeed, he, as every true person, by his true character built up in this way, stands compelling our refuge in him, the mysterious bond of common moral sympathy. Every time we hesitate, the heart of Jesus throbs in sympathy. He hesitated once. And his will is there with us at once a power to choose the right and keep alive our trust in the Father.—"But the mystery is all left. You have not explained after all." Indeed the mystery is with us still. But it is where it ought to be. It is the mystery of life and living relations between persons in a common experience. It is not a mystery created by attempting to relate two unlike experiences, one human and the other

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\**Christian Advocate.* Mar. 18, 1903.

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above and outside of human experience and called divine. The first is a mystery we realize. The second is an impossible, inexplicable, not-understandable and unthinkable, so-called divine mystery. Of this last we have many, but they were never mentioned by Jesus.



## CHAPTER V.

### The Early Ministry in Galilee

MATTHEW 4:23

THE third grand division of the book of Matthew and important moment in the life of Jesus is his early ministry in Galilee. Leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum. "He went about all Galilee." This is the break with home and the bold venture to save the world. He does not deliberately step out of and break with home, synagogue, state and business. He simply chooses the best field and determines there to establish his community of brotherly love and helpful service. He has a program for all society. He remains in the established order and uses every opportunity to be effective in it all. An old wine skin it is. Yet he fills it with new wine. Probably to teach them that they should make a new one; that social orders are a living thing as much as the spirit therein. Yet this very work he does, forces him out. That is the strange paradox of his life. He blesses every home, yet has none of his own; goes into the synagogues as of custom, yet as an outsider startles their rulers and calls to himself their violent opposition; renders to Caesar his taxes, yet must sharply condemn the established government and be put to death

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by it; accepts the necessities of life obtained by business and teaches diligence in business, yet hath not where to lay his head, the poorest man on earth.

Now herein is not a little danger of misunderstanding. Many think this break was a matter of choice on his part and simply the custom on the part of an oriental prophet. There are two great souls in India today that are giving India a new life. One is Gandi. He may be called Christian in spirit. His slogan is non-cooperation, passive resistance. His principles are: be perfectly chaste, adopt poverty, follow truth, cultivate fearlessness. He breaks with machinery and western education. He seeks to arouse a national consciousness, independence and self-development. His reform is deep and thorough-going. To save his nation from western industrialism, he calls it back to the old ways very much as Confucius did China. He is a frail figure, "scantily dressed in a loin cloth," weak of body, strong of mind. He was born "an aristocrat, son of a Prime Minister and a Barrister-at-law." This he exchanged for poverty and often the prison.

There is no doubt of his unique greatness and power, measuring far toward Jesus. The wonderful personality of this man is that of a real saviour. Yet there is about him very much of the voluntary withdrawal from society and its institutions. In the Middle Ages in Europe, he would quite likely have taken the vows of separation from the world. If he secures followers as an oriental prophet, I venture to say they will very

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soon be as separate from life as the followers of Gautama, and that voluntarily. I mean this in the sense of intimate discipleship. Of course he now has millions under his banner.

The other man is Sadhu Sundar Singh. He is an open and avowed disciple of Jesus. He was won to Christianity out of a family of caste and wealth. He thereby let go a vast inheritance. He was taught Christianity in the Presbyterian Church and ordained to the ministry in that church. He leaves that ministerial standing and severs connection with all churches that he may go freely to the people of all India simply as a Christian. He accepts for his services only food, clothes, shelter and traveling expenses. He has no home and never carries any money. He is a wonderful personality and true Christian; having endured the worst humiliation, suffering and persecution. He has marvelous religious power and draws many to Jesus. Many would follow him as a disciple renouncing home and possessions but he discourages it, feeling that they cannot endure it with him. But he himself is unmarried, without home, outside the established institutions, a cog in no wheel, as much so as Jesus became. He is truly spiritual, above earthly connections, and an oriental priest in manner of religious ministry.

Now are these instances our example? Has Sundar Singh truly found Jesus' way of life? I think not. The life of an oriental priest favors his way of work. Very naturally he falls into that way of work, being an ori-

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entalist. But Jesus says for us to serve and that he is among us as one who serves. Service aims to meet human needs. This aim shuts out a materialistic aim of gathering wealth. We work with our peculiar talents not for money but to do a good service. Only what we need to properly sustain physical life is justified for any of us. This law holds for all the disciples of Jesus, it is not for ministers alone. All work that is service is holy work. Each one has a divine calling. No one is commanded to forsake the order of society. We remain in it. Each one, where he is, lives out the abundant life of Jesus. It then becomes us to establish homes, fix our dwelling, be a part of government, church, school, business. The rights of one are the rights of all.

Brotherly relations, helpful fellowships in our modern world, is the part we all seek to play. This is the Christian order of life. As we see Jesus itinerating in Palestine, as it were outside all institutions, a truly lonely man, is it because he thinks that course of action is a vital part of his mission, or is it a condition forced upon him? I think the latter. I believe he was crowded out and off the stage of life. I believe if he were in our modern and complicated, inter-dependent world, he would find his calling and take his place. I believe, too, he would soon be crowded out and crucified as he was then. So any prophet today need not forego all human relations. The rather, let him get into all of them and fight to stay in. If he is true, he

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soon enough will be outside and crucified. The loneliness and crucifixion of Jesus is no choice of his. We blunder if we deliberately proceed as though it were; expecting to influence people for God. Taking up our cross and following him is not in that way. Crucifixion comes last not first.

Right here it is well to call attention to the author's silence on a very important matter. We can excuse him for it because of his main purpose to write so as to hold the Jewish Christians to the Old Testament writings and to Jesus. To have told folks, ready to reject ancient teachings of Jesus, about the rejection of Jesus and his program quoted from the Old Testament in the home synagogue at Nazareth might have seemed very unfortunate. Better pass over that incident to his popular ministry in Galilee. This seems plausible. And it may be the reason for the omission. But, however that is, he has left out a remarkable event and one very significant. For, not long after he makes Capernaum his center of work, he visits the old home town Nazareth and goes again into the synagogue as was his custom. And now he is asked to read the sacred writings where once he sat as a boy to learn and hear others read—the coveted privilege of reading and teaching.

What does he read? And of what does he talk? Does he urge the lonely life, the separation from human institutions? Not at all. It is the very opposite of the way of an oriental priest. He turns to Isaiah

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and reads a program of work and declares himself committed thereto, which will put him into the thick of life. Here is deliberate choice and it is not loneliness and crucifixion. Neither is it to bring light to Galilee just to fulfill Old Testament prophecy. It is a deliberate choice of unselfish, helpful service and nothing else. And he is so glad to tell them at home, however they may receive him. "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor; He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." To do this he goes about all Galilee; "teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of diseases." To follow him is to adopt his program not to hunt for a lonely life and a cross. That will come without hunting for it. It came to Jesus before he got out of this synagogue. Our task is to get busy at the program. This is Jesus for us today. Adopt his program.

With this correction, we are ready to give attention to the record before us. He does not work long before he wins disciples, four of them: Peter and Andrew, James and John. No matter just now the names and circumstances. They are two sets of brothers and they are fishermen. They are plain workmen, and that of the class of food producers, the most human men, unfettered and open-minded in all the world.



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However, the appeal of Jesus reaches all classes. Matthew was a publican. Nicodemus was a ruler and scholar. Zacchaeus was a rich man and so Joseph of Arimathea. One by one, he wins his disciples and carefully instructs the most likely for the more important work of leadership.

Four groups are to be noted in relation to Jesus. The twelve or fourteen instructed leaders who follow him about in his journeys, the larger group who openly confess discipleship, the still larger group with whom he was in favor though not properly understood, and those religious leaders who understood him and yet were in violent opposition to him and who are the cause of his death. These four groups are to be observed in relation to Jesus. They always appear in every movement. The fourth group will have our attention when we come to the sixth grand division of Matthew. The third group will be dealt with there also, calling for signs, gathering in crowds, shouting triumphs and clammering in mobs. With the second and first groups only are we concerned just now. Those who are disciples and those leaders among them. What is it to win disciples? What is it to train them? These are questions for us today. How are we related to Jesus and his method?

The records set forth a very simple manner in Jesus' calling men to be disciples. He seems to find men at their work and speaks to them, "Come follow me. Henceforth you will catch men." Is it so simple as

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that? Let us observe this closely. Maybe it will become a very deep matter. Great decisions and actions accordingly have deep roots and are not momentary judgments and single actions, but life consuming. There is so much of momentary quick choice going on and such a big cloud of dust kicked up by it all, that we are liable to be blinded and not see the real things.

An introduction to Jesus may be momentary. Some one gives us an invitation to meet him or to listen to him. Some incident or event may turn our attention to him. That is all very well, very interesting and pleasing to tell of. But to take that moment alone and to put all the meaning of life issues into it is manifestly unreasonable. To let it become the basis of an elaborately worked out system of evangelism is absurd and positively vicious. These men were grown men and established in business. Their ages ranged toward thirty years. In all probability they were of Jesus' own age or more.

Men do not form partnerships and sit at the receipt of custom without having reached adult life and gained a little experience. They were not young fellows of the later adolescent years. What I mean by this is that they were men of strong religious faith and development. Who had grown them, and was that development a part of their being ready to accept the invitation of Jesus? They had grown up in the synagogue. The religion of the Old Testament teachings was their experience. They were honest and reliable

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men. True moral development in righteousness was their experience. To be a publican, as Levi, is not necessarily to be a sinner. Zacchaeus, too, declares he had mended his ways before he met Jesus. The call given came not to men low down in moral and religious development. It came to those and was accepted by those whose logical next step in growth was the one Jesus urged upon them. This is the law of growth which knows no exception. Men without this foundation of religious training and development do not accept Jesus in a vital way. They may look on with favor or go with the crowd and be numbered as followers. But real experience in ethical and spiritual kinship with Jesus is not found in such. Salvation is a developing process. Men don't jump over any period in living. They grow up through all.

What does this mean for us today? This supreme moment in Galilee is the best time for observation of Jesus' method in saving men. He declares his program and goes to work on it. As he does so men become his disciples. He does not appear to argue with them. He simply gives the invitation and they accept. But his teaching, preaching and great deeds in the midst of men ready for his message make the acceptance on their part come naturally. He builds on other prophets' foundations. Here, then, is our work outlined. In our midst are children passing through all stages of religious development. We may so nurture them that when the moment comes they will quite

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naturally and willingly choose Christian living. And at the same time the adults who are ready come also into the fellowship. Once there the higher task of training more accurately those capable of leadership goes on. From its initial stages through to the end Jesus so works that we have an example not difficult to make vital in our day. Work out his program. Never begin with the harvest.

Jesus teaches, preaches, heals. This is the practical realization of his program. Any man, if he is large enough, may attempt all three. But most men do well to attempt only one in this day of divided work. All these lines of service work together for the saving of men and the building of the divine social order. They bring freedom in true development. They all, like Jesus himself, are absolutely innocent of authority. They mean cooperative work; a brotherly, sympathetic spirit and a fine harmonious coordination of effort. And when I think of these three fields of service with their enlarging institutional development, transforming government and business into their own nature and reaching out to include all people of all the world, the words of Jesus take on new meaning—"Greater works shall ye do." What a field of service.

Teacher, go learn his seven laws of teaching: see the divine in men, personally trust them, see with them, be concrete, positive, simple and self-illustrative. Preacher. Let your authority be lost in the evident truthfulness of your utterance. Doctor. Remember

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your task is to set life in order—all life in relation to the mental and spiritual life. Let the contagion of your own abundant healthy life cure the sickness of the world. This is Jesus for today. This is the logical fruitage of his beginnings. It is not the vain attempt to imitate the so-called miracle. It is the hospital, medical school and community practice. It is not the question on the street corner or the soap-box orator or the eccentric, fanatical preacher, but the well-trained and experienced and organized teachers and preachers. They should be the prophets in the succession of Jesus.

If Jesus were born today as things are in America, he would go into the educational system with an "A. M." degree; he would be ordained to the ministry in the regular course of taking orders with Reverend, Ph. D., and D. D. fastened to his name; or he would be an interne and write M.D. after his name, etc., etc. In place of slighting or discarding the established institutions, he would realize them to the full, as the best of service. He never would work alone unless forced to do so. True enough, he trod the wine-press alone. But he called all the time for others to come and help. If we answer, Christians in society will be at work with him. And their work will be their evangelism, the finest type this world has ever seen. Would that Capernaum had cooperated with him. She, too, could have been saved and could have become the light for every community.

## CHAPTER VI.

### The Sermon on the Mount

#### (a) INTRODUCTORY THOUGHT.

This is not an analysis of the "Sermon on the Mount." That has been made to the last detail and many times. This, in accordance with our method, is written to place all the teachings of Jesus in the realm of personal experience. For that is where they belong and where Jesus set them forth. They never would have been spoken otherwise. They were living truth then and are of value now and properly appreciated only in connection with concrete personal experiences. Their beauty and power are spoiled by abstracting them and pointing out the general truth involved. That will do for intellectual athletic stunts, but it is of little value in our living experiences. We must see life quickly and think in the midst of action. And help to do this is of value only as it is of the same nature and kinship. It must be the flash of thought under a similar living moment. This, the teachings of Jesus are. We see by the other gospel writers that they were originally uttered not in one sermon on a mount and arranged in systematic order such as we have here in Matthew. They were called forth in concrete life and



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in many different places. Yet this is easily lost sight of when the mind begins to analyse and compare.

Most sermons begin by the choice and abstract statement of a truth in a text. Then they establish the same in abstract reasoning and proceed to concrete illustration and personal application. But it is not so with Jesus. And Matthew could not arrange his utterances that way. He did his best to do so in putting the Beatitudes first. But even they are in the concrete. The first of this sermon could be made the last and the middle first. It is not cast in strict logical form and cannot be made so. Even the "righteousness" of the Christian as more than that of the Pharisee could come at the end as well as at the beginning.

Jesus lived in and with men and women in personal relations and we cannot take him out of them and hold him in thought and ideal. He is there today and cannot even be carried back to Galilee or Jerusalem. He called men to righteousness. No. He says, "Let your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees." You persons must exceed those persons in concrete right actions. If the word "righteousness" is snatched up and one proceed to a long exegesis of an abstract quality and then attach it to personality, he may take a long and intellectually beautiful journey and manage to keep within the ellipse and avoid the hyperbola. But the value of such a journey is questioned. We had better stay in the realm of personality all the time.

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We have none too much mental strength to deal properly with personal relations and establish them securely.

Charles P. Fagnani, in the *Christian Century* for May 22, 1924, makes a distinction between the cause of Jesus and the person of Jesus. He says that the personality of Jesus is found in the church's theological statement and the cause in the principles of Jesus. Heretofore the church has made its appeal to men, that they come to love the person of Jesus through the intellectual or theological road. He desires the church to appeal to men, that they take up the cause of Jesus, those principles for which he died, and in that way come to love and adore him. But what reasoning this is. Jesus died not for principles but for persons: for men and women. He was not defending principles. He was facing men, caught in their personal hatreds and fears and suffering their personal animosities. Persons were at death grips. And to suffer with him, experiencing his salvation, means to keep up the same personal relations with the persons about us, in personal loves and hates.

Furthermore, personality is not separated from activity. There is no cold, clear, pure, vital spirit separate from principles or actions, which we call personality and to which we come by the road of theology or principles. That is a conception of the mind and utterly devoid of reality. God separate from the universe in which he lives, and active in no other one, is a fiction of the mind. First, personality is revealed to

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us primarily in action, not in theology or principles. Second, personality is inseparable from action. When one observes the multitudinous activity of a person, he has seen the person as much as he ever will see him. "Have I been so long time with you and yet you do not know the Father? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. The Father's activity is I, before your eyes, with you and in you."

When we come to the Father we get into his activity. When we define, explain, understand and realize the Father, the divine Person, we do it in the oneness of this activity and the Father. Personality is truly defined only in terms of activity. Such and such a person is the one active in such and such a way. The personality of Jesus, where emotion and will can come as well as and more than reason, is the one acting as we see. Love and adoration are an activity of personality in relation to personality. As we get into that realm of Jesus' activity we fellowship with him and know him. Beyond this, there is no further and different knowledge of anything deeper and purer, not yet sensed. The activity of our personality becomes one with that of Jesus and we are saved. The two personalities are bound together by personal relations. More than this, there is not in salvation. "Lafayette embraced the cause of the colonies when first he heard of it with all the ardor of youth and the self-disregarding consecration of a liberty-loving heart; it was not till afterwards, and as a result of his activity in the cause, that he fell

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in love with its leader, George Washington." Here is a distinction without a difference. There was no "cause" separate from the personality of Washington and the men with him. The cause was their cooperative activity. Lafayette joined in that activity. A part of that activity, was love and adoration of the persons so acting. They arose as soon as the activity began and as a part of it all. Indeed, if there was any precedence, Lafayette's personal activity of love for persons preceded and became the ground of all his other activity.

Now, kindly let us all possess ourselves. This is not pantheism, or the identification of a pure personality with the dead stuff materialistic world. By the time it is perceived that what we call matter is simply a visible form of activity; and what we call personality is not that inactive, so-called living essence but a real live reality that cannot stop a moment in its infinite activity else it would vanish. By that time the charge vanishes.

### (b) BEATITUDES.

And now we come to the Beatitudes. It is a long way that we have come, but coming that way our arrival is significant. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of the heavens." A little better in Luke: "Blessed are ye poor: for your's is the kingdom of God."—Here is a definite statement to individual people. It is not "Blessed is poverty." That is the statement of a philosopher. Also it is so

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abstract and general it would not apply to any one. It hits no one and hurts no one and helps no one. It would require a reason to accord: "for it is divine." But it is an entirely different realm when "ye poor people" are named. One can see those poor oppressed people all about Jesus and listening to him. They have been robbed of their liberty and taxed to the last cent. They feel unfortunate and oppressed. Life is a hard struggle. They covet the wealth and possessions of their overlords and think them happy. But Jesus sees to the heart of life.

Selfish and tyrannical people, living in luxury at the cost of other people's needs, are not blessed. Normal human relations are disregarded. Injustice arises. The lot of the oppressed is a blessed state in comparison. With them, moral principles arise. They are kept to the task of meeting their simple needs of life. To them comes at once the truth of helpful service. There is no danger of their lives being eaten out by luxury. They have time to consider spiritual values and true human relations. They are not sluggards. They are the hard working people with few possessions. Their children are normal and strong and will inherit the earth. Look on such people. They are blessed. More of their relations are genuine than of any other people. If they fall in love it is true love, not commercial or court marriages. If they hunger it is normal and healthy. They sleep soundly. They think clearly. They act righteously. Justice has a

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chance among the poor. It is a condition of life that works for brotherliness and human solidarity.

The great souls of this earth, including Jesus, have been poor people or people who gave little thought to riches. And there is a logical relation between the two. The kingdom of God has a chance with them. Heaven is sure for them. The great stream of humanity, the heart and soul of human life that flows on forever, is the poor people. Get outside that group and you are at once among those who could be swept away and humanity would lose nothing. We are to conquer this earth and to use its material things to meet our needs and to help us to live the spirit life. Use rights are the only basis of ownership and possession. This relation of men to material things and to each other is forced upon the poor. It is brazenly disregarded by the rich. Blessed are ye poor.

Now the same essential conditions run on through all nine Beatitudes, even to the persecuted for righteousness' sake. The opposition, the contrary winds, the suffering and all that thwarts us and cuts us off from our desires and compels self-restraint,—these things are to be counted blessings. Be happy and do not mind them. They all work for the finest elements of character. The persons who mourn, are humble-minded, hunger for righteousness, are merciful, pure, peace-makers, persecuted; are hated, reproached and cast out, are in the best and most helpful human relations. Blessed are ye. Ye are the salt of the earth,



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the light of the world. Your righteousness exceeds all. But the remarkable fact to be noted here is that all these Beatitudes are in concrete personal language. Truth is identified with personal relations. Outside these relations, just and loving, we cannot find Jesus or his teachings.\*

### (c) RIGHTEOUSNESS, TRUER AND DEEPER.

Leaving with reluctance these "Blesseds," let us look at the righteousness that is more than that of the Pharisees. Under this head all the rest of the sermon is grouped. Indeed, this is the theme which Matthew has stated for all the sayings of Jesus. But to the critical mind it soon appears to lack comprehension. While some of the teachings are simply a deepening of the righteousness for which the Pharisees stood, others contradict and set aside their laws. Jesus is not only digging deeper as when he makes murder to include the inner heart desire to kill, but he is also rejecting and substituting, as when he puts non-resistance in place of an eye for an eye. Matthew desires overmuch to save the face of the Pharisees, at least in their teaching of the laws of the Old Testament. The law

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\*The nearest approach to Jesus' teaching method that I know of in non-Christian religions is a statement by an ancient Brahman, centuries before Jesus lived, quoted by Prof. E. W. Perkins in his *Origin and Evolution of Religion* p. 165: "If one keep all the law and perform all the forty ceremonies and be not virtuous, he is less than he who observes no sacrifice or ceremony but is virtuous." Yet, even here, while this is in the realm of personal terms, the quality named is a general term. "Virtuous" is like "Goodness." What good or what particular virtue is in mind? Furthermore, the teaching of Jesus in the great commandment, called up by this Brahman statement, is, as recorded in Mark 12:28-34, put forth in connection with a particular concrete experience with the self-righteous, formalist scribe. The conversation of two persons is the setting for the great teaching of Jesus. Personal relations as always.

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is still binding. They are not to overthrow the law. They are simply to go deeper. Be true to the teaching of the Pharisees but not to their actions. They say but do not. And so the teachings of Jesus are all related to the law in this way. Jesus pierces to the innermost center of motives and attitudes. Nothing is solitary or individualistic. The mystical and unseen spiritual realities exist as well as issue in human relations. Inner faith activity is between persons. Our inner consciousness of God shall be defined in the social bonds of trust and love.

The whole realm of religion, inner and outer, is in the whole realm of life, human life, concrete personal relations. All things, for Jesus, come into the realm of personal experience. So he drives all laws back into their inner sources. But he overturns, also, some long established laws of Hebrew life. Not every moral custom of the Hebrews ran true to life. So he brings forth, overturning and substituting, the true inner law in the same experience and situation. This freeing ourselves from Matthew's framework made for his purpose to harmonize Christians with the law is necessary to a correct appreciation of the teachings of Jesus.

(1) Five such teachings are now before us, spoken without argument and powerful and authoritative only and entirely in their experiential value. Murder in the heart, the desire to destroy the life of another, revealed only in the manner and sharp word or curse,

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shares the same condemnation as the act. True life has no impulse to destroy life. Adultery in act is wrong. But equally wicked is lust as revealed in eye and hand and the exchange of one woman for another. The true love of a man for a woman crowds out all lust for another person.

Swearing falsely in testimony at court and in religious oaths is wrong. But why the oath at all? Is it right to lie when no oath is taken? What can ever make it right to say one thing and mean another? Language is of value only as it carries thought from one person to another. Let "yea" be "yea" and "nay" be "nay." Then oaths and swearing are absurd. And ye have a law of justice that gives an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But such resistance of the malicious man leaves matters still worse. Why add to the misery of any man to balance an evil already done? Such attempts at justice are brutal and an utter failure of justice. Moral values are not measured and checked off in that way. The one who has suffered the loss of an eye is debased by the destruction of an eye in another person. Material goods can be replaced, but evil deeds are beyond recompense.

Crime cannot be retaliated or punished. It may be corrected and avoided in the future. Change the attitude from retaliation to non-resistance. Meet, without retaliating physical force, and disarm the malicious person as he comes upon one expecting physical resistance and to receive an eye for an eye. Indeed, heap

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kindness upon him. Turn his crime and brute force into an act of generosity on your part. Answer his cruelty and demands with a double measure. The old law was love for neighbors, hate for enemies. The true law is love for all and prayers for the persecutors. God's attitude is the same for all. Be sons of God. Love makes alive. He is always giving life for all. Indeed, if one is good and has an enemy, that enemy surely needs love badly. Doubly effective is the help given under such circumstances and by the person from whom the enemy least expects it.

(2) Next in order comes the deception of the hypocrite. He who keeps up appearances in religious practices when there is no inner reality and expects in this way to affect for good both himself and others is the hypocrite. To give, to pray and to fast are inner soul movements. They are outwardly manifest in material gifts, pious utterances and self-denying physical behaviour. Therefore perform these outward manifestations and the people will be moved for good. So reasons the hypocrite. Indeed emphasize and exaggerate these outward manifestations and still more wonderful effects will be obtained. Advertise your gift; shout the prayer on the street corner, beating the breast; and disfigure the countenance and dress. It will work. It has worked many a time. You can get results. The reward comes—but it comes now. It is temporary. Such a thing is propaganda. And propaganda gets results. But they are not results that

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enter into the stream of life. The people affected are not the real folks. They are the imitators and copyists. We might crucify a whole field of such folks and the world would never know it, never feel it. The evangelist stated at the beginning that he did not care to know anything about any one.—How marvelous.—What would a doctor say to that when he is called to deal with a patient?

There is no need of the careful study of the personal religious experience of those whom he purposes to influence. He comes with his ready made gifts and prayers and fasts, his elocution and tears and gestures, and he gets results. The usual weak-willed folks come forward at once, say the sentences given and make another new start. Those overwrought and nervous folks will come too. And of course those children who are well-trained and growing finely into Christian character will be led to make some "decision." And all will join the church, 200 in all. A goodly sum of money, not too large but larger than what the pastor gets, will be presented, freely, and the ostentatious person moves on to affect other unknown persons for good. For did not Jesus travel about and were not men transformed in a moment?

Meanwhile the pastor remains to do some thinking and to continue his real work of praying, giving, and fasting. So, too, the high-power salesman may secure many buyers who would not otherwise buy. The politician can get votes and offices, the doctor make cures

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and win patients, always new patients however. All is success and rewards already. Bless you, yes, they have their reward—*But* when thou givest and prayest and fastest, get down to business. Wash your face and wear your usual clothes. Go into the secret place and *will*, after the door is shut. You do not need much street corner location for willing. And the opening up of the soul in lifegiving is frosted to death if anyone knows about it. Advertising a big volume gift kills the soul of giving. The mourning, broken, fasting spirit makes a clean, pure shining face and well-blackened shoes.

I am wondering, too, if the world will ever see the relation of poverty and great wealth. The one means alms, the other luxury. Wherever there is great wealth in the hands of a few there will be a mass of dependent people. There never were so many people in great need in the United States as today. Never were there so many with such great fortunes. And the benevolent giving of America passes all records. We can truly boast of it before all the world. The world recognizes it. We have fed the starving. We have our reward. Probably a billion dollars comes short of a true estimate of our alms since the Germans went into Belgium. At the same time the wealth of the world has flowed into our hands. But did we have the moral strength to protest effectively Germany's advance? Have we taken our place in world affairs in the name of righteousness? Have we gone far in the condemnation



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of the economic imperialism from which we profit with the other great dominating nations?

Capitalists have multiplied and capitalistic autocratic control has increased many fold. The landlord-tenant system of farming in America has been increased and the tiller of the soil been forced a long way toward peasant life. Dictators have arisen all over the world. Christian missions in the world have suffered terrible setbacks. And our efforts to change our acquisitive society into a cooperative order are much weakened. Until we have done these things let us hide our alms with shame. They are an index to our state of civilization. The charity of the middle ages bred more and more poverty. The people of Rome feeding at the public cribs marks the decline of Rome. Egypt's millions buried in the valley of the tombs of her kings tell a pitiable tale of mass slavery that a few might roll in luxury. The government allowance to the millions out of work in England is a sad rebuke to her selfish politics. Tell me how much charity exists among the nations and I will tell you how low they have sunk in confusion and oppression. The sins of luxury go hand in hand with the shame of poverty. Alms and benevolence tell the story.

(3) Now come three prohibitions. Lay not up treasure on earth. Do not pile up profits. In particular be generous and give away profits. Such is to have a "good eye" a "sound eye." Even go so far as to take no thought for the necessities of life. God who gives

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life will provide food and raiment. Not only is profits as an aim in industry wrong but anxious care about the necessities of life is also wrong. There is only one all-consuming aim for life and that is the kingdom of God and its righteousness.

Judge not. For your judgment measures yourself as well as another. And you may have a greater evil that prevents on your part a clear and true judgment on some matter. Condemnation is proper only with those already faultless. The kindly heart hesitates to speak the judgment. In all our weighing of material things let us make room for error. In all our mental calculations, let us be humble minded. In all our moral estimates, let us avoid the absolute decree.

Do not in your zeal cast pearls before swine. Remember that pearls are appreciated only by those who understand them. Applied to Christianity, it takes a certain amount of religious foundational development to appreciate the appeal of Jesus. The higher we go in life the fewer there are to appreciate the high life. Therefore our zeal can easily run away with us in any good cause. Let wisdom govern us.

(4) Three commands now come forth. Pray and do to others as ye would have them do to you. Enter in through the narrow gate. Few go this way. Many go the broad way. Beware of false prophets in sheep's clothing. Cultivate the ability to recognize men by their deeds, their whole activity. Again the appeal to life away from intellectual utterances. The fruit de-

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termines the nature of the tree. And as a final word comes the parable of the house on the sand and the house on the rock. These teachings are the rock foundation when builded into activity. Outside this realm, Jesus is not at all exercised. As all his sayings deal with personal activity, the one to whom they appeal as true and who accepts them is the one living them. With him only is Jesus acquainted. No great achievement of mind can take the place of right moral relations of persons.

Now in this reading of the Sermon on the Mount, I have passed by, but not overlooked marriage and the family, prayer, and the Golden Rule. They are too important to treat briefly. An essay on each one is all too little attention. These will follow this chapter. On the rest of the sermon, especially the hard sayings, I must now make comment.

### (d) THE HARD SAYINGS.

I have insisted all along, as we study the teachings of Jesus, that we see the concrete personal form, and keep in the realm of personal action. Even inner soul movements are defined in personal relations. And now remains the difficult task for the practical western mind to relate the hard sayings of Jesus to experiences at hand. Being poor, or poor in spirit, and being persecuted—how can that be a blessing? Why not use brute force to resist the attack of a malicious person? Why love an enemy or one who has injured us? Why return good for evil? Why turn the other cheek or

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go the second mile? Why must one lose his life to gain life? Why not pile up profits on earth? Why forgive the unrepentant? Why do unto others as we would have them do unto us? Are not such things ideals or reaches of the mind that are not supposed to be realized now?

The only way out of this is to consider these things in connection with life. They all present situations where life is interfered with. Therefore it is, how to create, preserve and develop life. What is the nature of life? Not to weary ourselves, let us take one of these, that of non-resistance, and treat it in connection with the nature of life. That will answer for all and show us how to explain and understand all the rest.

Consider a tree growing finely. Along comes the woodsman and cuts a gash into its side or cuts it down entirely. What now? The evil is done in spite of the tree. What is the tree to do? We all know what it does. It sends its vital elements to heal and grow over the cut. Or it starts another shoot from the roots. If torn up by the roots and all trees of its kind destroyed, vegetable life begins back there where trees were first developed and keeps on growing.—“But the tree has no will.” God is its will. And He stops not or turns aside in his work called vegetable life. In the usual ways of activity in that realm, He continues his work, originating, varying and growing trees.

Again, there is an ant-hill. Thousands of the little creatures are swarming about it and through it. I

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kick my foot into it and destroy a part of it or all of it. I notice great excitement. I have killed hundreds of the little creatures. What do the others do? A day or so later I return to find the breach repaired and the hill reconstructed. Not one has undertaken to return my malicious attack. If he had it would have been futile. But collecting themselves as quickly as possible they are at the task of life, having done nothing to return destruction for destruction. "Go to the ant thou sluggard and be wise."

How, now, about the hornet's nest or the bee-hive, the lion and the bear, etc., etc.? Here, suddenly, the analogy aimed at breaks down. A deeper insight shows all nature one great warfare. Each daisy represents the death of many daisies, choked out by its struggle to live. And each insect and animal bears witness to a universal warfare. One genus against another and one individual against another. All nature is conflict. God in nature teaches war. The mortal combat is part of the nature of life. Man as the rest hates and fights and dies, glorified in the supreme death-struggle. —All which seems unanswerable. Let us see.

Maybe this observation of nature's so-called warfare is just the thing we need. All depends upon how we interpret the facts. The law of the jungle, let us grant, is indeed, such as set forth. That is the nature of the brute, the way he lives. And so long as men live simply the animal life, they live that way too. Theirs also is the law of the tooth and nail, the mortal

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combat of brute force with brute force. If they live only the natural life, doubtless it will be that way. But that is just the point at issue. Because the jungle is so is no reason that man must be so or is so. The nature of his highest life may be very different. God's creative activity may intend something more. Is not man another kingdom with all the powers of the animals and one more? Very much as vegetable life is all that the mineral activity is and more.

Man is called to live the spirit life. He is unique and the highest in all nature. He is to live out of the natural up into the spiritual. There is no analogy possible. The biological process has made another turn, climbed up to another level. He is there alone. No other genus or species of animal has reached that level and may never do so. He finds life on this level goes on not by the law of the jungle. When he kills and destroys his kind he slips back into the jungle. Many individuals of his genus are slipping near the edge, hardly able to stand erect. Only a few are strong and abundantly alive in this new realm. And they do not live unto themselves. All of the crowd live together. They only faintly comprehend the nature of the new spirit life. And one in their midst points out more accurately the nature of justice and love. He states and lives the higher law of non-resistance; says to love an enemy and resist not the evil man, but to do good to him. This is a new law. It is the law or the nature of the divinest spirit life.



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Animal life is subordinate. It may be completely transformed under this fuller life and become more secure than ever. One thing sure the fuller life must be supreme and go on at all costs or it is doomed. Its going on compels the giving up or transformation of the conflict activity into the cooperative, sympathetic and loving activity. Just as the horse, one of the most intelligent and desirable of animals, comes to his position and maintains it only by dropping many an old law of life, or by being transformed in nature, man is transformed in nature. This is a common thing in animal life, this continual stepping up to a larger life. This is the outcome of the logical reasoning from biology in connection with war. The biological necessity of war, as always in the nature of humanity, is contradicted by every step of evolution. Indeed, that war should cease among men is the biological necessity. Life unfolds that way. Indeed the farther down the scale of animal and vegetable life we go the more of so-called war, or dog eat dog, we find.

How do I live in the spirit? When another person comes upon me and robs me, or clubs me or mortally wounds me, if I desire to keep love alive in my soul, there is only one good way under heaven. That is to *keep on loving*. One dare not for a moment stop to retaliate. He must be on the job all the time. And there is no better food for love than the cruel enemy. That is a veritable feast for love-living. Nothing but strong love can do it. Loving enemies is not milk food but

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meat food in the soul's activities. Blessed is the man who is able and has the opportunity to live the love life at such a moment. To die at such a moment the physical death is small matter. A glory, a halo truly magnificent is won and an abundance of life is won for the race. Nothing is lost in the higher realm. The spirit has a way of remembering and making available that life power realized. A soldier's death on the battlefield,—matching hate for hate, brute force for brute force, steel for steel has no comparison. Too long has it been glorified. That is slipping back into the life of the brute.

“But it will not work.” Work how? To be sure it will not help us hold our profits and our economic plunder. To be sure it will not corner the markets of the world and grab the raw-materials. To be sure it will not collect taxes from one nation to enrich another. To be sure it will not lay up treasures on earth, build and guard palaces, or even guarantee security from hunger and cold and death. To be sure it will not prevent a bullet from crashing through the brain or defeat and drive an army of soldiers out of our nation and keep them out, guaranteeing physical life, liberty in material ways, and the pursuit of happiness in material comforts and ease. To be sure also, it will not destroy property, or starve babies, or wipe out the whole population, or confuse morals, or corrupt life, or deny God. It will do none of these things. It will simply keep the soul alive in love, active in loving.

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That is all it will do. And that is enough. For that means the peace that passes understanding and power to lay down life and to take it again. With that goes all else of food and drink and homes and culture and lands and nations, the earth and sky and heaven and God. Why, do you know that these meek folks are to get *all the earth*?

Who knows but that Belgium would have had more houses and lands secure and honor unsullied and people alive and life uncorrupted, if she had met the German army of greed and plunder with non-resistance, or rather with non-retaliation of brute force; had met them with love? Who knows whether or not the German soldiers could have kept up a campaign of hate and plunder when met by love. Who knows? The preparedness jingo orator does not know. That much is sure. Love is the greatest power on earth. If the Belgians had been free from the love of laid up treasures on earth, had been living the high life of love with eye single on treasures of heaven, if as many Belgians had used love's weapons as used hate's weapons and gave death for death,—who knows but that she might have broken the spirit of the Germans and prevented the whole awful plunge of humanity back toward the jungle. Who knows till love is tried what love can do? Love has done greater things than that.

## CHAPTER VII.

### The Family

THE sixth chapter of Matthew vss. 27-32, the eighteenth, vss. 1-6 and vs. 10, and the nineteenth chapter vss. 3-15 set forth the teaching of Jesus regarding the family. In that record is found the positive teaching that a man and a woman in love should be one and remain so for life. It states that this has always been God's way of life. It also exalts children in the home to the rank of cooperative fellowship and love. So much is a statement of the laws of human life. Then these verses also warn against the destruction of this happy state. The impulses and living emotions that naturally give rise to the family may be allowed to wander till they become uncontrolled lust for some other person. This is a sinful thing, fatal to the family, and a just ground for divorce for the innocent party. The causes which may lead to such wandering are controllable yet are not stated fully in this record. But the principles of the family and that which destroys it are clearly stated and are doubtless true to the life of Jesus. What of our modern home in the light of these things?

In answering this, I am at a loss to know just how to begin. I want to be truthful. But how can I tell

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the truth about the family? So important and fundamental, so good or so bad, words fail to get one anywhere. There is so much sentiment about the home that the one who writes about it writes either love stories or sob stories. Holding to the truth, his article is so full and running over that the cold reasoner drops it with disgust. He wants logic and facts. Still, to give him what he wants is to disappoint him just as much. For figures and facts do not count here. As nowhere else, here, statistics and lies are synonymous. Whatever kind of flavor they have they leave a bad taste.

For instance, *The Family Service* puts forth the following: "In Franklin County, Ohio, where is the city of Columbus, from July, 1919, to July, 1920, 4706 suits for divorce were before the county courts. During almost the same period, 4382 families were started. Which means that there were 324 more homes asking to be destroyed than were being made. Eleven hundred and fifty-one homes were actually broken up; about one fourth of the number of homes established. This was four a day for every working day. Further, only 103 were for adultery. The modern home is easily wrecked. But good news to add, this divorce rate was four times the average rate per one hundred thousand population throughout the United States."

Now that is statistics and that is not very inspiring, especially to those contemplating matrimony. Nor do

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these figures tell half the story. For America surpasses all other countries in the number of divorces. Can it be so in our boasted land of liberty? Is this the land of family quarrels and race suicide? Further, while we are about it, let us go on to consider the homes where the husband and wife live on the precipice of separation all the time, unhappy and ill-mated. Here is a case where life is a crucifixion for one party. There is a case where it is a veritable living death to the other.

"See the children," says one, "growing up crippled and handicapped, with feeble talents and unlovely dispositions—a continual disturbing element and often a curse in society. Count the jealousies and murders. Go into the realm of adolescence, where youths are finding their mates, see the tragedies, the faithlessness and deceit, the ignorance and folly. Remember the vamps, male and female, feeding on deception and satanically happy in ruined affections. Also observe the happily mated lovers who wait through years hoping for an income sufficient to start life together.

"Consider the children crying to be born yet never coming to life; the infant mortality, mothers destroying their children, the large proportion who are underfed, untrained and shamefully neglected as though undesired and unloved, starving and dying by the millions. Read history and interpret primitive records of paternal or maternal autocratic dominance, of wife stealing and wife slavery. What means the estab-



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lished order in many lands of many wives for one man or of the exchange of wives and husbands at their convenience, etc., etc.? It's a black, bad picture all considered. Why get married? What husband or wife mocks us with the statement they never had a cross word? Domestic peace? When and where is it to be found? Is there any soundness in the human family?"

Yes sir. This reasoner is dead wrong in his unlovely picture. The family is sound. There is very much more domestic peace than war. Children are not spawned as fish. They are born in love and tender care. There is not a race suicide. Population increases. Education of the young improves. Disease is less and less. Men and women are true to their vows. Young people love, court and marry, and live happily ever after. Vamps are hunted down like wolves. Most homes are true. Jealous fits are not the rule. Husbands and wives unhappy and ill-mated are the small minority. America is not the worst but the best land on earth for the home. One man to one woman is not uncommon but is the rule and has been from the first. The homes broken up are the few. Most husbands and wives never think of divorce. The family is secure, statistics or no statistics. Love is stronger than hate. "Husband and wife," is the sweetest and truest phrase on earth. Father and mother and children is the happy state of human life, not on the decline but ever coming to richer and fuller realization.

The truth is this: Like all the other institutions of

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society, the family is undergoing a transformation. It is giving away some things and taking in others. It is no time for statistics. It is time to act and think. The family's chief elements are rearranging themselves into more permanent and harmonious relations. This makes customs that went unquestioned stand forth in their true light as terrible evils, and states of happiness heretofore undreamed of within attainment. Therefore is the discontent: the original, bold analysis of marriage, the break with the past, the promise of the future. Therefore, also, is the abundance of writings and the fullness of reasoning on the family. Only good can come of it all and happier homes in the end.

Once more the moral consciousness wins another victory. There shall not be a double standard of morals in the relations of men and women. What is evil for the one is sinful for the other, in sexual irregularities as in all other things. This accounts largely for the apparent discrepancy between Europe and America in the number of divorces. It has much to do, too, with legitimate and illegitimate children. If there are female vamps, there are male vipers. Away with shams. Let the truth stand forth. If it is evil and adultery to look with lustful eyes, then there are other just grounds for divorce than forbidden actual sexual intercourse.

If all holy affections die in a man and moral corruption appears with fearful sexual disease, where is the justice of formal bonds which hold a pure soul in mar-

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riage thereto? Men and women. Let us be fair with each other. Frankness here if anywhere in life. Deception is at fearful cost to both of us. If there are mistakes of the mind in reasoning, is the heart perfect in its loves and hates? Why such severe, unrelenting, unforgiving condemnation as soul hunts for its soul mate? In justice and candor, let us have a time of venture, of approach and retreat, of hasty declaration and calm retraction, of final mutual choice and hearts fixed in love forever. Only thus will we come to a just and blessed security in the end.

Marriage is a perfectly balanced relation between two persons, a cooperative life. Neither one has the advantage. If we twit ourselves about the pursued and pursuing, let us know it is an unreal distinction, a difference in method and appearances only. The approach to each other is mutual. Neither one has a responsibility greater than the other. In the first movements of persons toward each other, in the steadfast plighting of faith and love, and in the holy bonds of matrimony, it is a mutual and helpful cooperation. Autocracy has no place, putting one above the other. No doubt there are many instances where the one is far superior to the other, and through some misfortune the marriage has come to pass. If so, the stronger soul stands forth. But even there the full realization of the powers and talents of each in a harmonious and articulate relation is just as reasonable. Whether the differences are great or small, the principle of asso-

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ciated activity is the same, and the realization of it as possible and necessary.

Furthermore, it is a necessary corollary of the foregoing that relatives and friends cannot determine relations and make choices for any two souls. It is a personal matter from beginning to end. Uncles and aunts keep out, and fathers-in-law also. There may be employment bureaus, but not courtship bureaus. The world is sick of arranged weddings and endowed daughters. Long enough have husbands and wives been bought and sold, and weak blue-blooded men mated to pale blue-blooded women. That time of sham and deception is gone. It is the most cruel and deadly shaft ever hurled at human personality and affection. If ever there was a place for the personal will to have its own free activity from first to last, it is in marriage and the home. There is one sacred retreat of the soul where it has a right to be alone with its mate in a united activity. Let us pray for it. But let no one enter it.

Advice to lovers? It is ridiculous. Preparation for matrimony? How absurd. Helping folks to understand themselves? That is better. At the beginning of adolescence, a good knowledge of the sexual organs of both sexes and of their relations to each other should be gained by every boy and girl. This should come in the regular course of study of all the other physical organs of the body, and in connection with the higher spiritual relations of men and women.

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So that at the very opening of the enlarging social nature, in these vital things, there may arise an open and frank, courteous attitude rather than a secret deceptive and vulgar one. Only thus can the adolescent be saved from serious mistakes and kept from the worst corruptions of life.

It was one time the bad boy who had in his pocket the inartistic and vulgar picture of the woman in her tights, and who listened to the still more vulgar and obscene stories and songs of the vile leachers of human virtue. He thereby had the stream of life poisoned at its spring. But not so any more. All that is tame. The Police Gazette has been robbed of its wicked eye. For the advertisements in every magazine are far more life-like and really artistic. While their front pages, with the best of artistic touches, so reveal the human form that all novelty is gone. So-called art, pure or not, has had its way. Furthermore, the well nigh naked athlete has lost his advantage over his sister. We have the female physical culturist just as near the entire nude, exulting in physical grace. While the one piece bathing suit is the same for women as for men.

Whether we will or not, the continual appeal to the sex sensation in theatre, magazine and paper has broken down not only all false prudery but also all opposition to the early acquisition of a pure knowledge of sex matters. If our adolescents are to think pure thoughts, culture holy emotions of life and its origins

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and be considerate young ladies and gentlemen, they must have this knowledge and have it early. The wonderful mysterious sex attraction of men and women with the fundamental spiritual values which are at the center of the home and the propagation of the race are no longer heightened by the woman's hiding her form under the folds of a dress manifold and sumptuous. That is gone. The present tendency is to wear little or no dress at all. And while we may condemn the absurd extremes, the present woman's dress very much as man's is a thing of virtue and commendation. Useless ribbons and frills are no more. When common custom prevails, men and women both will be the better for it. It is only an outward symbol of an inner sincerity and frankness between men and women in the most important relations in life. The age of secrecy and deception in love will be supplanted by the age of trust and understanding—the only things fair in love as in war.

I believe this is the one great adjustment for the American home. If we can secure more intelligent understanding of each other in the choice of partners in life we have solved the greatest problem. This at least we are forced to do. It is the only thing that will save us on the one hand from sexual irregularities in youth and on the other hand from unhappy and tragic marriages. We must start right. Of books on sexual matters, we now have a fine list. Educational equipment in arrangements for the fun of youth and social



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activities are well in hand. Athletic outlet for the superabundance of the physical spirits of youth is available. While at the same time, leading and controlling all, is the well-thought-out moral and religious culture, the many social gatherings for young folks, a multitude of interests beyond the home and supplementing it. Let us do as well as we know.

Make room for these things in the home? Yes and no. Years ago in this country, every home had its front room or "parlor"; a cold, unused, cheerless place. Its furniture was the best in the house. Three times a year it was used. It is gone now. The large living room has taken its place. Now unless this living room is a place for all; warm, natural, social, friendly; unless it is a place where the friends of the adolescents in the home are as welcome as father's associates and mother's friends something is wrong and must be righted. Bring back the parlor with its secrecy? No. Recognize the uncertain loves and ventures of youth as a true and natural part of home life. It has its place there the same as the prattle of the baby and the crazy racket of the boys and girls. Just because it is the uncertain beginnings of a new home is no reason we should exile it. Above all it is no place for laughter. Such a course can result in nothing but elopements and forced marriages.

Young hearts, longing for each other yet uncertain in choice—how they need sympathy, love and understanding—which father and mother alone can give

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and ought to give. How cruel to make no place for it. Marriages arranged by parents? No. That is not the personal freedom. But are we to do nothing to provide for the natural, free, personal selection of lovers? Must we go from autocracy to anarchy? If young folks go wild today, our fathers and mothers have only themselves to blame in failing to see the new situation and providing sympathetic supervision.

Once the home is happily founded, there arises the economic question. It takes a lot of money to create an American home, and a good deal more to run it. The American family lives in a HOUSE, not a hovel or hut. More than any other lands, we have fewer castles, stone cold, isolated and far away, and more houses with five or six rooms—houses where individual privacy and social warmth and culture may be realized. And such things, when made possible for all families, require an economic basis of large and democratic proportions. Our superabundance of resources in the past made this possible. But recently we are not so happily situated. Our resources have slipped into the hands of a few. Children are denied a birthright, families are small in number and crowded into smaller houses simply because there is not the economic basis which once existed. We are in no small danger of slipping back to the hut and two-room quarters of the European family. Besides this and from the same reason, millions of mothers are forced to secure part of the income for the home. While the new independence and

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unrestrained life for women has made the economic question for the home of prime importance. What is to be done? Back to the old? To ask it is to deny it. As always, a new situation or difficulty calls up the past experiences to be revived as present solutions. But voices calling out of the past are false voices.

We will never carry back home the work we have learned to do in the factory. The home is a social center, intimate and happy, before it is a bakery, sewing circle or butcher shop. Nor will there ever again be any restraints or injustices to women in economic and political activities. The field is open to both. Women have the same right as men to follow their work when it is taken out of the home. Matters must find adjustment. Idle women at home with men at work away from home is bad, indeed, as much so as women at work away from home and children uncared for. But there is a way out. The school and the teachers can become the home for much of the day. So that, with the return of children and parents, a good part of the day, in fact more time will be available for the intimate family associations than ever.

Every one worked in the family of the Nineteenth Century, most of it productive work. Everybody must work now if the Twentieth Century family is to succeed. It was a little kingdom by itself in those days, independent and individualistic. It is the same little kingdom today, but it has lost its isolation and reached out into the larger social relations in a way not

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dreamed of then, in no realm more so than the economic. In place of opposing this development, let us recognize it, control and improve it. If the family has become a group of folks, collecting at certain hours of the day and night in the home to eat and sleep, a reasonable effort to make those home hours happy, restful, helpful, will secure for its members more real parental care, child nurture and family affection than was possible at any time in the years gone by. The trouble is, with the change of work from the home to the factory and industry, there has also been a change of control and purpose of making goods for the home to making goods for dividends. Let the work in industry be controlled and purposed as before by those making the goods and to meet human needs, and the economic basis of the home will again be secure.

From so much I think we can see the essential democracy of the home. It has always been the best place where love, kindness, sympathy and helpfulness were to be found. So much so that Jesus made it the metaphor of divine human relations. But the formal organization, the customary relations have not been in complete harmony. Often there has been real antagonism. Some member of the group was denied a free personal development. The wife has had more than her share of ill-treatment. And it was not till recently that Jesus' attitude toward children was given any thought. We are just beginning to recognize the child in the home and society. His rights and privi-

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leges as a person are being respected at last. When we see these and set the child in the midst of them in a free activity, authoritative commands and blind obedience have small place. We discover him entirely able to play his part in a democracy that includes all. His nature is not cramped into a dull docility. He grows into a life of self-control among others and personal initiative. His will is neither feeble nor stubborn, but forceful and cooperative. As a citizen in a larger democratic order he comes naturally to play his part.

Now the place of education and religion. In the past the home has been the place where most of the cultural work was done. Religious life centered in the household God. This was so in every religion, Christian or not. Possibly we may still claim the home is the greatest school and church to be found. Yet many bewail the decay of family religion. And we have not yet related the child to the school or the adult to the educational process. Perhaps only ten per cent of the people of the world are receiving school privileges for a little period only of their lives, or happy in church activities. The western world is not so bad. But nowhere is there anything to boast of. What is to be done here? Is there to be a carrying out of the home to the school and the church these cultural things as there was the materials things to the factory? Yes. Exactly the same process to my mind.

In the home related to the school, we may count on two things. Many more people will secure an educa-

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tion than in the past and that education will extend over a longer period of life, even from the cradle to the grave. This development we may count on. We have only begun the educational process. Who knows the possibilities of culture and the achievements of culture when all have a chance for fuller development? How much is now crushed out? And as this school system is developed the home will benefit very much. A fine co-ordination of cultural things must arise. School teachers will be assistant fathers and mothers, in a real sense building character with them. Indeed, exactly the same process will go on in both places. There will be no mark between the two.

Parallel with this and finely co-ordinated with it will go religious education. The school and the church will never again be one, but they will be better articulated. The church will harmonize with the home religion as the public school with home education. True enough the family altar is going, at least as it was in the Christian home of the last century. But we need not feel that all is lost or anything of value in this age. I know as well as anyone the value of that institution. It is a blessed memory; inspiring through all my life. I know, too, how ill-prepared I was for the larger social life.

That family altar was quite individualistic and priestly. Father read from the Bible and prayed. We all listened and knelt with him while he prayed. There was a fine reverence. Yet I did not learn to pray in



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that religious exercise. As a social group religion, it failed very much. It was good worship for father. How much we all entered into it vitally, was another matter. It was narrow. And we all had to learn by sad experience the larger social life of the world. There was an unreasonable clannishness hard to be free from. If that family religion could have been socialized, it would have been good for us. It must be so now or the institution cannot live. But this is quite impossible unless it includes others beyond the family. The religious practice must run parallel with the larger social life. This is what is actually being done or aimed at. Already there goes on a social religious activity for each member of the family that was not known or thought of fifty years ago.

The Sunday School activities and the week day religious instruction, poor as they are, mean very much and will mean more in our personal religion. With this new feature must be harmonized the family devotions. We do not have today a family God, nor a tribal God, nor even a national God. He is God of all the world, Father of all mankind. This conception must enter into the nature of family worship. It was not there in the family altar which I knew.

There was something there, however, which we must retain whatever form family religion takes. There was all the time and in all the family life a sense of God and a genuine moral earnestness. We were all devout. Right and wrong were ever present.

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Good and bad, true and false, love and hate were very real to us all. They had a religious basis and were given a Christian content. If neighbors were esteemed, it was because of these things in their life. If we made friends, it was on the same basis. If we had received injustice or had offended or wronged anyone, it was settled on the Christian basis. No opportunity of moral culture on a Christian basis was let go by. One instance in my life I never can forget.

When a boy twelve or thirteen years of age, I took my father's hammer from the tool chest and began pounding with it on the anvil. It was not made for such work and it broke. Then I knew I was in trouble. My disobedience had wrought mischief right in my hands. What was to be done? My brother younger than I, was with me and witnessed it all. I was greatly concerned. Action immediately and cunning was absolutely necessary if I was to escape dire consequences. I first threatened my brother with a severe pounding if he revealed the matter. The threat was quite effective. His lips were sealed. Then I placed together the two pieces of the hammer and laid it back carefully in the chest. Then I waited.

Some time after my father had occasion to use the hammer. And of course he found it broken. Who had done it? One by one he asked us five boys. "Did you break the hammer?" When it came my turn I very quickly and emphatically answered, "No." Also I was not a little offended that he had asked me the

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question. Furthermore, I was not entirely ready for it. I was ready to fight but not to answer kindly questions. Still I felt not a little satisfaction that I had so skilfully met the issue and settled once for all a matter that had given me a great deal of uneasiness. My deliberate and well planned lie had done its work well. For Father said no more. But my experience in the business of lying was limited. In fact this was the first and only thoroughly well planned lie I had ever told. And I was not at all prepared for the after effects. They were different from anything I had yet experienced. I was at a loss to know what to do and how to conduct myself.

The first very distinct sensation I remember of having was that of being outside the family circle. I was an alien and a stranger at the table. I could look no way. When I glanced up I saw every pair of eyes with the accusation "Liar" fixed upon me. It seemed that Father's eyes burned right through me. When it came to play, it seemed that I was left out; not intentionally on the part of my brothers and sisters. I simply hesitated and questioned my right in the game until it was too late. At bed time, I was especially careful about my prayer. It seemed to be empty. The words rattled in my mouth. Sleep, too, was slow and troubled. So it went for a day or two until life became quite miserable. Death would have been a relief.

Then it was my father saved me. Going aside with me he began: "Clyde, I know by your actions you

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broke the hammer. It pains me much that you try to hide the fact from me. I am so sorry that you did not tell the truth."—It was enough. I could endure it no longer. So I cast myself on his breast and cried out my repentance and sorrow.

Now all was as before. I was soon back in the family circle. The reconciliation was complete and life went on again as a song. And the best of all was, that night I was happy even in the dark. My prayers were said without effort. I was talking to God as to my father. I had something important to talk about. I was not ashamed to look anyone in the eye. Even God was very kind.

Now such was the moral and religious life I knew in the home. No matter how that is produced it must be there or there is a loss that cannot be made up. No other institution can equal it in opportunity to develop the moral and religious life. When we think about people and moral relations, the family is the most expressive of all. It is also the best metaphor of our relation to God. He is our heavenly Father and we are his children. This comes close home to us. It is much better than to call Him a judge or a king, or even a teacher. The best of all the parables of Jesus is that of the Prodigal Son.

In my unfortunate experience I did not pay a penalty. I did not even buy a new hammer. That expense came out of the common treasury of the family. There was no punishment given to square up the account. Nor was anyone else punished to make matters

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even and balance an abstract justice. When happy, peaceful relations were established and the proper disposition returned to me, that was the end. Several people worked and prayed to bring that about. But not a one exchanged his goodness for my lies.

And so from such experiences has come my way of life in society. Thus the world is made akin. No other institution can do better than this. It is the earliest social group for all of us. The court room and the state hardly touch us till late in youth. The school and church will always lack much of this intimacy. But our mothers and fathers, our brothers and sisters come right into our hearts and make wonderful transformations of character. If that little society in morals and religion is Christian, or whatever it is, eventually all society will be Christian or like it. We are all held in social relations and institutions. Many persons, human and divine, indeed as far as our acquaintance goes, make up those relations. They must be happy and peaceful. We cannot be at outs with any person without breaking these moral bonds. We must be honest and fair with all, especially God. We deal with Him as with our own souls. For He is nearer than hands and feet.

There in the home, again: I testify, I first was held in democratic brotherly relations. There was first experienced a loving helpfulness. All which has gone with me into all my life. So that the first question I have always asked is, "Does he have these relations

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and moral values? Is he Christian?" Somehow, I came to have by this family inheritance, not by my own conscious efforts, an ever present form of moral values above everything else. The ties of physical beauty and money values between boys and girls I have broken again and again because they did not measure up to my moral standards. As I look back on those days of boyhood and youth, it seems everything was brought to this touchstone of moral worth. The two boys and the two girls who were my most natural and congenial friends I broke with on moral issues.

The distinct experiences of my early life were moral struggles. They have been such ever since. For me to deal with a situation of life is to evaluate its moral implications, and that in the sight of God. Why this comes first I cannot say, except that it was by such experiences as related above. It does not come first with most people. It was no conscious effort on my part to begin with, any more than the growing of my heart in my body. While it has taken a conscious effort to maintain this way of life, I discovered it in myself a habit already formed. This I attribute to a religious home.

And now I see I have failed to treat the family scientifically. So I must do that before closing. Here it is; the function of the family in human society, its origin, forms, development and modern problems.—Somewhere lived a little news-boy and his mother. They were all in all to each other. One day the



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mother died. The loss was irreparable. The little fellow decided to raise a stone to her memory. But getting a grave stone was no easy task. For his earnings were small his love very great. The cheaper class of stones were far too much for him. There was a broken shaft of marble, however, which the proprietor named at such a price as to come within his means. And now his task began.

The next day he took his little four-wheeled wagon and pulled the stone to the cemetery. Some way he managed to set it in position. Then commenced the work of carving an appropriate inscription in the marble. Securing an old file, he sharpened it down to a point and went to work. Every afternoon, after selling his papers, he took his old file and hammer and hurried to the cemetery. It was hard to keep the lines true and straight. The big capitals, too, looked better but they required more time. Finally his work was nearly done. One day more and he would be through. He had sold his papers all out and was hurrying to finish his work. But as he ran along the street—Well, there was a runaway team. They picked him up with the old file and hammer in his hands. He did not live but a day or two. But he thought of nothing else to the last. "I didn't get it done, but she'll know I meant to finish it, won't she? I'll tell her so, for she'll be waiting for me."

They made a little grave by the side of his mother.

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And they left the broken marble stone as he had fixed  
it at the head of her grave.

MY mOTHER.  
SHEE DIDE LAST WEAK  
SHEE WAS ALL I HAD. SHEE  
SED SHED Bee WaITING FUR—\*

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\**S. S. Advocate*, 1907.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### Prayer

**T**HE sixth chapter of Matthew, vss. 5-15, and chap. 7, vss. 7-11 are the materials which are to be considered in connection with prayer.

In this record it is urged that prayer is not vaunting and boastful but humble and sincere. Its very nature is secret soul communion. Words are of no avail. Its field includes all life, according to the form given and which we all repeat. And it is an asking and receiving on our part. Indeed, well nigh all religion is included in the things written here concerning prayer. With these as texts one could write the whole of theology. Sabatier's wonderful utterance, "Prayer is the soul of religion," declares the sweep of this soul activity. There is no limit to what properly belongs here. But space sets a limit just now. In the following pages will be considered briefly the theory and practice of prayer. First the theory.

#### (a) MODERN THEORY OF PRAYER.

Long years ago when a boy, I wanted a wheel-barrow, and I wanted it bad. I wanted it so badly that I lay awake most of one night thinking about it. The wood had to be carried into the shed and the coal likewise. And I had to do it. So I must have a wheel-

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barrow, no other way about it. My back was breaking and no one cared. So I went into my father's workshop, took down the saw and hammer, found some boards and nails and made a wheel-barrow. But the thing would not stand up. Its wheel squeaked and would not turn round. It was concave on one side, convex on another, acute angle on the third and a straight line on the fourth side. My brothers laughed at the contrivance, and my sisters wondered what it was. But my father looked at it a moment and something happened. He went into the work-shop and took down the saw and hammer, found nails and boards and other material, and himself made a wheel-barrow. And his wheel-barrow stood up straight. Its wheel turned round without squeaking. I had my wheelbarrow.

Now who made that wheel-barrow? My father? Not a bit of it. I made that wheel-barrow myself. It was my intense, overpowering desire and determination to have a wheel-barrow that really produced it. I furnished the motive power, the only power on earth, and my father did the mechanical work. He saw my desire and was obedient to it. He was simply my servant, nothing more, doing my will. The wheel-barrow never would have come into existence if it had not been for my determination and will to have it. My own personal will was the moving force, over all opposition and ridicule, that produced it. Personal will-power is the only real power in this world.

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At the center of this world and of human history is an omnipotent personal will. With infinite intelligence it goes forth to the unfolding and realization of its own great purposes. Not a star flashes into existence, not a blade of grass springs up, not a human soul comes into being except as the motion of this supreme will.

Yet this divine will is not isolated and alone. It is not solitary and unrelated, even though it is all-powerful. Its very nature and activity demand other wills. Along with this will, in its very image, of the same nature and power and eternity, moving and acting under the same laws and in harmonious relations, are personal human wills. Co-working with that divine will, seeking out its great work and entering into it, becoming a part of it, those human wills help on in the unfolding purpose; each one adding its little mite to the whole. With a reverent "Thy will be done," as children with their father, they lay hold with him and help on in the one common and eternal task.

Even so great is the privilege of the child of the Heavenly Father. He who rises to the trustful, filial life, as Jesus, becomes heir to all that his soul is capable of receiving from the Father. His will being in harmony with the Father's will, he has the blessed privilege of going into the council chamber of the Father and planning and working with Him. And often, if his child were not there to take hold and help, the Father's plans would fail and his purposes would

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be delayed. More than we know, He waits for our help, glad to give us a place both in planning and fulfilling the plan. He depends upon and makes use of our activity in thought and will. The only condition He makes is that we step up beside Him, learn of Him and act in harmony with Him. Dependent upon Him for our very life, a part of his great activity, yet we add to or subtract from his power. As children and heirs, we have been endowed with a part of his kingdom. We may use it to increase it or destroy it.

Now our Father is ready to listen to us, to change, readjust and fashion all to meet our needs. He feels our heart throbs. He knows, He cares, He understands. The least movement of our wills is noted by Him. He has no hard and fast, no fixed and universal plans, unyielding and unchangeable. On the other hand, this whole world is his will being realized. He thinks only accompanying his volitional activity and not ahead of it. All his activity is real. He did not start this world going and then busy himself about something else. But what the world is this moment is what his activity is the same moment. If He were to quit willing, and thinking while He willed, the whole universe would vanish that moment. Therefore He can make a place for us at any time. He is able to give heed to our desires. The earnest sincere purpose, the weakest movement of our wills is taken account of and given a place in his work. It is never lost. It becomes an added power to the accomplishment of the whole. Every



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person in the universe, every star that shines, feels the force of our wills. The yearning, pleading, groaning, praying human will in harmony with the Father must be felt. Evil men must be influenced by it and give way before it. It moves for their salvation. Wherever He moves and quickens men to better living, there we are also. How wonderful that our spirits may go forth with the Father in "Thy will be done."

Who but the Father shall limit our will-power or set the bounds of its influence? All the Father has is ours. We have an interest in the universe. Why may I not exercise my will for the rain and sunshine? Or for men's peace of mind? Or their quiet rest in old age? Who shall declare that wilful determination on my part is of none effect? Who will scorn the feeble movement of my will? Is not my will become a part with my Father's will? This world is my Father's and mine. I am owner and co-worker with Him. That star is mine to hold in place with my Father's help. I am my brother's keeper. That brother is mine to save and keep with my Father's help. Not a prodigal son comes back to the Father, not an evil is overthrown, but my will has moved to that end. If the Father wills that China and India be redeemed, my will is there with Him, moving and working to that end. It is not in vain that we pray and will for the salvation of the world. Everything harmonious with life is an aim of prayer.

This personal will-power is what works in love and

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faith in religion. It is a false humility that says we are only instruments in God's hands. If that were all, then a phonograph will answer the purpose of a preacher, and a loud-swelling organ that of a consecrated singer. It is a false demand that is abroad for men who can organize and hustle. That is but half. Men are more than organizers, directors, statesmen, leaders, managing the talents and powers of others or of God. They are a power also. Finding God's methods and laws, they unite their wills with his and become a power with Him. These good men are chief and far beyond the organizers. They do not have the attitude of simply calling on God to save men. They are in a wonderful association of men and God, working together. Nothing much happens in religion or anywhere for that matter outside of this united activity. One great family of persons working with the Father.

### (b) THE PRACTICE OF PRAYER.

"Ask and it shall be given, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened"—All this seems too good to be true. It is so simple, so bold, so positive and so personal. Is that all that there is to it? Is that the truth in prayer? Is that the way? For the scientific mind, this is startling and wonderful. For the trustful, uncultured mind, it is dangerous and intoxicating. To all of us, it challenges our strongest imagination. This thing that we have defined as the earnest, trustful approach to the Father; the personal will searching out the divine will and exercising itself

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mightily; its original, creative, independent yet socially dependent activity, strong as ten-thousand men, is made, by these words, the most simple and wonderful commerce between personalities that the world has ever known—and this is our danger.

I remember reading a book entitled *Remarkable Answers to Prayer*. And the impression which remains with me from that reading is that God gave answers to some prayers in events that occurred aside from and contrary to the regular, natural and orderly way of activity. For that moment God turned aside and brought to pass things which had no relation to his regular activity. They were healings of body and soul, and changes in the world suddenly and mysteriously and very uniquely. Explanation was assumed to be impossible. In this fact was their remarkable nature. I often wondered as a youth why God did not answer a prayer of mine in that way; always concluding that I had not prayed hard enough. For my askings seemed as important as those answered in that book. But the answers never came to me.

One such instance will suffice; much abbreviated from the *Adult Bible Class Magazine*, Pilgrim Press, (June, 1924, p. 20), it runs like this: The old Scotch widow lives alone on the hill. It is winter and a terrible snow storm is on. Her meal is all gone. Expectantly and trustfully, she puts water and salt on the fire. But there is no meal. Then she goes to her closet to pray. While asking for meal, a knock is heard at the

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door. She goes to the door and behold a strong girl throws down a sack of meal. She states that, much against her will and seemingly without reason, her father insisted that she bring it in the storm. He had been strangely dinning it in her ears all morning that she bring it at once. The good woman points to the water and salt ready for the meal, and claims the whole experience is a matter of prayer.

Now granting all that is claimed for this, which seems quite reasonable and true, though not fully explained, yet, what permanent value results? How does it explain the many instances where the answer does not come? The need and prayer are just as genuine. Are they lost and unanswered as millions starve to death? Is there no connection between them and the permanent relief of poverty? In such an instance do we have any law of procedure for our prayer life? On the contrary, are we not forced to turn from such to a closer inquiry into prayer activity in connection with personal experience? Surely there is a realm, since prayer is so significant in life, where this human asking and divine answering is orderly and understandable. If so, it will be the truly remarkable and mysterious thing. And its laws and principles will be supremely important for us to understand. Let us search out this realm and discover, if possible, this mysterious relation between men and God and events.

Permanent answers must be fitted into human life as an essential part of it. However it comes, it must be

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harmoniously adjusted and related to all the world and all life. This being so, the course we must take in our search is pointed out at once. There may be new unfoldings or new departures in God's activity, but they are not disorderly or unrelated to the whole. God may do much of his own wisdom and will that is not the result of our prayer. Such may be viewed as the answer to his own prayer. The will and the act are separated with difficulty. So when we will God's will we also act with Him. There is cooperation throughout. "Thy will be done" makes complete harmony of wills. It is at the same time complete harmony of action. Let us search out this cooperative activity.

(1) For ages men uttered the prayer for help to cross rivers and mountains. Their muscles many times were weary tugging at the oars or from climbing the steep, winding, narrow passes. Weary and tired, many a man has longed and prayed that he might reach the other side of the river or mountain without so much effort. Here and there, as the tribes of Israel before Pharoah's chariots of war, God seems to have answered their prayers. But the real answer came when they found out God's laws, and threw the arch of stone and steel across the river; or with dynamite and modern engineering bored through the mountains, and yielding themselves to God's power of electricity and steam, were carried along with almost no effort of their own. When that time came, the prayer

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was answered, not for one time and place and person, but for all rivers and mountains and all people forever.

(2) Many times men have longed for the knowledge as to how God created his universe. And all the time He wanted to give them the knowledge. He had not hidden his process as a secret forever. But in canyon, stone, tree, and buried fossils, in mountain peak and strata and earthquake, in stars and comets and burning suns, He had left behind Himself the written pages of it all. We need only bestir ourselves with microscope and telescope, measuring rod and test tube, and God will give up all his secrets of creation. He will speak through those things, thundering so loud that all will catch the sound. Indeed, all creation groaneth and travaileth to speak. No settled, true enlarging answer to that prayer ever came by any other way. Geology and astronomy, physics and chemistry, botany and zoology, etc., etc., are the answers to that age old and continuous prayer. Through them God makes his revelation. Whatever little glimpses He may be said to have given into his activities in the physical world aside from these, matters little. In these ways, we get the knowledge and prevail upon God to do our will.

(3) God made the potato and the paris green and the potato-bug. He had some purpose in creating and sustaining all three. We do not see the purpose with regard to the potato-bug. But He surely had some good purpose in mind. For He has made many



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of them and continues to make them. It is the finger of God fashioning every one of them, body and legs and striped wings and eyes and hungry mouths. He put animal life into each one. His fingers do not seem to tire very much or to lose their cunning. Every summer's season, He brings into existence millions and millions of them. He seems to care just as much for them as He does for his potato and his paris-green. As he fashions the potato-vine, branch, leaf and tuber, so with equal pains, He fashions the potato-bug. Indeed, it seems, as far as He is concerned, that He made the potato only as food for the potato-bug. So far as He is concerned, He will never bring his potato-bug to eat any of his paris-green. You may set a pan of it in the potato patch if you wish, but the potato-bug, by its own God-given instinct, will not hunt up the paris-green and eat it. Not at all. But it will at once, as if driven by that instinct, hunt for, even wait for it to grow, and seize upon and utterly devour the potato. As far as God is concerned, that is the arrangement He has made. He creates and sustains all three. He has set the bounds of existence of all three. Potato and paris-green can get on fairly well together. Paris-green and potato-bug are mortal enemies. The potato must give up its life for the potato-bug. These are the divine conditions, this the divine order with regard to these three forms of activity.

Now from the time that men found out that the tubers of the potato were good for food, to the present

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day, he has uttered the prayer that God would destroy the potato-bug and save the potato alive. Many a man has stood helpless before his field of potatoes and watched his crop eaten up by millions of these little striped and highly favored bugs. As he has seen the very means of his livelihood destroyed, he has uttered a large prayer to be rid of the potato-bug. And God was willing, from the very time that He created the paris-green, to answer that prayer; waiting all the time for men to give Him an opportunity to answer their prayer. The paris-green also was fairly groaning and travailing to answer it. And as soon as men took the paris-green, pulverized it and sifted it on the leaves of the potato so that the potato-bug would eat it unwittingly,—that moment God ceased to sustain the bug and gave new life to the potato. The prayers of millions of men were answered. Their wills had prevailed upon God and radically altered his usual activity to another activity in harmony with their purpose. Man's will and God's will in the physical world were at variance. They were brought together by man's prevailing in harmony with God's larger will for human life in complete mastery of the physical world. Our spirits with Him have won a victory, in that we are able to sustain life in and by the mastery and rearrangement of the physical world which He masters. This is will-power of the finest order. This is prayer. And all the time God seems to be our servant. Here, indeed, we receive for our asking.

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(4) Many a mother has bent over her child as it was seized suddenly by some dread disease, and prayed earnestly for help. When she knew that, if help came not in the course of an hour, her child would die, she has poured out her very soul in prayer for help. Yet that prayer went unanswered, and thousands and thousands of children have died because the doctor arrived too late. But when we understood God's activity in the lightning and in expanding gasses so as to give Him a chance to work for us, He answered that prayer. The automobile, the telephone, and medical science are the answer to that prayer. By those means, God has almost done away with time and space and disease.

And so with the crippled, the maimed, weak and unfortunate ones of earth; the hungry and starving ones. How many prayers have gone up to God for such and from such. Yet they starve and suffer and die, more during the past ten years than ever. How can God put his food into the mouths of his hungry children, when some men corner it or stuff themselves with it? When they make better distribution of it, the prayers will be answered. Railroads and commerce and political liberty, so many ages coming to us, at last make it possible for God to answer the prayers of millions even in a sudden calamity. Japan was hardly destroyed before food and clothing and care were at her doors. Thus at last the prayers of starving souls, all starving souls, is being answered. It takes a long prayer and a lot of prayers to produce a real answer to prayer. To

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get a happy world condition, everyone must will and pray for it.

And now, why not make conditions, hunt out relations, and give God a chance to work out the answers to our prayers for spiritual things? Does the way in this realm differ from that in the realm just referred to? Surely not. The answer will come in accord with God's orderly, related spiritual life. If we find out and give Him the opportunity, He will answer our prayers here also.

(5) As long as there have existed in our big cities those crowded, unhealthy, sinful districts, Christian people have prayed for the salvation of the unfortunate ones in such places. And when General Booth discovered that a brass band and works of mercy opened up their hearts and gave God a little chance at them, those people in thousands came into the kingdom. It was not all. But it helped and in the right way. When the political men and the men of money adjust their ways to the laws of Jesus, then God will answer those prayers still further. The abolition of the saloon made still further righteous living. Some time maybe, the Christian order will be so universal that it will be hard for the people who have failed to find a place to slum out the end of life. Broken lives prayed for by all can be redeemed as we give God a chance.

(6) In the year 600 A.D. Christianity was taken into China. But it failed to take root and do its work

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of transformation. About 1290 A.D. it again went into China. But it failed a second time to root into the life of the Chinese people. It was not until the Nineteenth Century that Christianity seemed to take firm root in China and India and all the Orient.

Why was it delayed? Why, even now, does it work so slowly? Did not Christians pray in 600 A.D. for China as we do today? Is not Christianity the power of God? Is He not the source of every missionary effort? Does He not long to have his Chinese children come to Him? Most assuredly God was ready and Christians prayed. But the centuries of delay in the answer were because men did not make conditions so that God could act. Christianity means fellowship in daily, brotherly relations. The prayer for these things was answered when we made quick communication, commerce, a common knowledge and did away with prejudices of race and caste distinctions. Then the grace of God could function in China.

Indeed, God seems to be on hand even ahead of time. For we tremble for the security of the issue and fear it will be a third failure. In short, the answer of our prayers for the salvation of China is not in any way miraculous or out of harmony with, or other than the enlarging world life. The lawful orderly building of the world life makes available divine power to save China. Prayer and this seem to be strangely articulated. Is not the connection vital? The prayer that does not come to be a cooperative activity with God

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is not a true volition. Some way that true soul movement will find that issue.

Consider, further, this great missionary movement, the prayer of the Christian for the non-Christian world. It is a wonderful volume of fixed purpose that all men shall be saved. Thousands, many of them, have sealed their earnestness with their own life blood. Yet how slow, how many defeats, what little progress. Nevertheless, what a harvest is now upon us as the whole world in institutions and life takes shape from the life and teachings of Jesus.

When the prayer for the heathen began it was the aim simply to snatch from the sinking ship a few souls, take them off and save them. Now it is go aboard the ship, set things right, and bring ship, cargo and all on board safe into harbor. At first it was all other religions are wrong, only Christianity is right. Now we see a measure of divine revelation in all with Christianity as the highest revelation. At first it was only the evangelist with a formal invitation to break with heathen Gods. Now the missionary is the man of every trade, profession and work of our complicated social life, considering himself doing a necessary service to men and exalting it thereby to a holy calling on the level with all good work, sacred as all. Therefore, going among the heathen, he helps them to live happily with their brethren on earth, making life rich and full. The whole missionary movement has become a broad-side sweep, an attack all along the line, the whole social



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life of Christian people conquering the whole life of the world. Missionaries are, therefore, doctors, teachers, farmers, machinists, business engineers, (not acquisitive and autocratic) nurses and statesmen as well as preachers. All are ministers of Jesus to the non-Christian world. They all go in love and are moved by the same prayer or spirit will with the Father.

The prayer has gone on till the mind has at last found God's way of bringing all nations to himself, not a few but all together or none, the whole world which He loved and willed to save. When one reads the story of Cox, Good, McCay and Livingstone, and then understands the present missionary situation with the whole nation coming under the leadership of Jesus in all its social life and actually demanding its own Christian church in form and polity and spirit, it becomes the most marvelous answer to prayer ever recorded.

(7) Here and there in England during the half century before John Wesley came, Christian men were praying for a reformation and for Christian living. God was waiting to answer their prayers. How did the answer come? He raised up John Wesley, who rediscovered the old Christian truth of a personal experience of religion. And when people, led on by John Wesley, found out that God could come to men in a prayer meeting and class meeting and in a simple, plain, free preaching and singing of the gospel of Jesus, they

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went to work and made such conditions that God saved men by the tens of thousands.

(8) A story as I recall its being told by Louis A. Banks himself, runs like this: He went to a certain church. The people were praying for a revival. One good brother came to him and said, "There will never be a revival here till you get that brother and his son to forgive each other. Their enmity divides the church and the community, and seems to be the stumbling block in the way of a work of grace."

Whether this man's reasoning was right or wrong is not the point just now. When this knowledge came to Mr. Banks, he was just foolish enough to believe that public meetings in the evening and personal work during the day with these men was the thing needed to give God a chance to work on their hearts. That, he thought, would be the proper conditions for the grace of God to establish itself in personal worship of God and a social and brotherly fellowship among men. So, three times during the day, he went back and forth between father and son pleading that they forgive each other and urging them to come to church. And that night, the grace of God had its way with those men and they were gloriously saved. And not only those but many more in the revival that followed.

(10) And what of the prayers to save the people of this community, old and young? Surely there has been no small volume of prayer here. Why are not more saved to a richer, fuller life? What hinders

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this earnest, trustful approach to God? Is it to go unanswered? Not at all. It will go on as true as life goes on. And a part of its growing and living will be the recognition and realization of truer ways of life. The cramped Christianity of past and present has been laboring along under the delusion that there is a distinction between a Methodist boy, a Presbyterian boy, a Baptist boy and a Congregationalist boy. But God made no such distinctions. It is quite unnatural to the human spirit in its religious activity, indeed contrary to God's activity, to so divide boys and attempt to work with them. We cannot do that and succeed. And as the people here become more and more earnest in prayer their minds as a part of that praying will point out the true laws of boy religious life, the laws and principles upon which God acts and works in and for boys. Then we will be co-working and willing with God. Better men and women will be grown. Then the prayers of all past and present will be answered. This is asking and receiving. This is Christian praying.

These are a few instances of the real living conditions in which our prayer life grows strong. They themselves are not the inner movement of our will and soul in prayer to God for an end. But they are that without which all such inner spirit movings are empty and void and unreal. They are that without which real prayer cannot be. Soon or late prayer must come to these realizations. Further, they are the best way to get at a true conception of the inner soul ac-

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tivity. That is the kind of soul praying activity that has these results. As we get the best understanding of what any personality, or individual spirit is, by observing the actual, real activities of that individual in his daily life, so we learn best the inner movings of our spirits through observations of our outward manifestations. Real, genuine prayer does not exist apart from God's will and activity. As we clasp hands with God and go about with Him in his work, there comes to us at once a knowledge of his ways of work. At every movement of our souls in prayer, comes the knowledge of God's laws of activity. The two are inseparable. Their ever increasing realization is something always remarkable.

## CHAPTER IX.

### The Golden Rule

#### THE GOLDEN RULE THE WORLD OVER

Do not that to a neighbor which you would take ill from him.—*Grecian*.

What you would not wish done to yourself, do not unto others.—*Chinese*.

One should seek for others the happiness one desires for oneself.—*Buddhist*.

He sought for others the good he desired for himself. Let him pass on.—*Egyptian*.

Let none of you treat his brother in a way he himself would dislike to be treated.—*Mohammedan*.

The true rule of life is to guard and do by the things of others as they do by their own.—*Hindu*.

All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.—*Christian*.

—*Selected*.

SOME years ago, 1907, Brand Whitlock, who has done such genuine service in statescraft, was elected mayor of Toledo on a Golden Rule platform. He appointed his chief of police on the same platform and fashioned his whole administration likewise. It was a truly acceptable and successful administration. His efforts to apply the Golden Rule did not ruin city government. Politics and business have always been considered the impossible field for this ethical principle. Yet here in this and other similar instances it has been most effective and helpful. The whole of life is comprehended in its promulgation and

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application, not after it is developed to a certain high level, but now, as life's most vital breath. Let us see how it is truly the great law. Let us see how naturally the loving soul finds expression in every way in this law of life.

God purposes a kingdom of righteousness where all men are in harmony with Him and with each other, in peace and good-will. And there are four conditions of life which seem to me to prevent the coming of that kingdom. The first is ignorance of the laws of the kingdom; both the first principles and the enlarged structure. This hangs as a millstone about the neck and clogs and drags like the quagmire. In place of marching we sink down and die. Confusion, wrangling, and despair rule in a kingdom of pandemonium.

"O, there are a few who know better and who live accordingly," is answered. Yes, and One especially, might be added. Upon what principle will those few go to work to be rid of that mass of ignorance? What principle and ruling motive controlled the One? How will you state it that all may apply it and to work? Simply ask the question of the few who know. What would you, who now realize in a measure the blessings of knowledge, if you were deprived of it, have men who have it do to you? Your answer must not be from the standpoint of the ignorant man. You know by experience the blessedness of true knowledge of the laws of God's righteous kingdom. And you must answer from that experience. This is not a question to



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the ignorant man but to the few who know. Knowing as you do, feeling as you do, living as you are; not dead in unfeeling ignorance and deaf to all such questions, but with ear tuned and keen to hear, start reasoning what YOU, as you are, would have men do to you if you were as one of those without your present knowledge. Without your present knowledge, you might answer, "Let me stay in my ignorance." But with your present knowledge and experience you can only answer, "I would desire earnestly that I be given the knowledge." And that being your answer, the duty is upon you. It cannot be escaped. And we need not add. "Even so do you also unto them."

Upon this basis rested the missionary standard, "Evangelize the world in this generation." Let no one escape the knowledge of the laws and life of Jesus. As we would have men do to us—this sends the missionary to the ends of the earth.

The same obligation rules men who work for fullness of the enlarging structure of laws, knowledge of the very nature of God and all his universe. As men are true to this rule by evangelizing, by breaking down rebellion and bringing into touch with the first principles of this kingdom, so they are true to the same rule who labor for a larger knowledge and patiently instruct beginners in the more perfect way. Pity us of Christian lands that we do not apply the rule more faithfully in this regard. The first efforts are so dramatic and fascinating that it is quite easy to stop there.

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But we fail if we do. No progress or fullness of knowledge is obtained by such a course. Indeed we lose that already gained if we do not go on. O, that we could arouse in church people today the joy of enlarging knowledge, intensive development. Will it come in any other way than by the Golden Rule?

Another condition that prevents the coming of the kingdom is the stumbling and falling, the failing of the people of good purpose or weak wills or both. And in the midst of these things the Golden Rule has a wonderful chance. Its application is twofold. First, as a preventative and second, in rescuing.

Life may very properly be considered as a game. The relations of people in industry, in civil and social conditions, are quite largely those of boys in a game of ball. Where all take part with good-will, each one doing his part, and all together struggling to bring to pass a higher life for all, more blessed and happy experiences. In the game, too, if one fails, all suffer. So if one is about to fall, it is best to give a word of warning. That ever ready purpose to put oneself in the place of him who is about to fail spurs us quickly to give the warning and save from blunders.

This, too, is best even with those who are of evil will, who break over and disregard the social order. For in actual life there are two hosts taking part, the good-willed and the evil-willed, selfish and unselfish. All are not pulling together. Some are adverse. They refuse entirely to help. They even try to prevent any

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advance. So that it is not a question of regulations for the team, but of regulations for the team in conflict with another team, and mortal conflict. The problem is double. How am I to act toward my friend in my team and at the same time how act toward my enemy in the other team? I must "love both friend and foe in all my strife." I must cooperate with both. We who battle for the right must be victorious in the proper way and with good-will. We must also see to it that they who battle in the wrong go down in defeat in an atmosphere of good will and helpfulness. The good folks of the world must play on both sides of the game. They bear a double load. Yet it is no more than Christian. It is the application of the Golden Rule.

Do you say, "It cannot be done. It will not work. It simply destroys the game. If I must warn the other team every time I see a man about to make a mistake, I cannot win the game. I defeat the cause of right by giving a word of warning to the enemy." But not so. We will not lose the game, the real game. It is not our business to count scores. The scores do not tell the story of winning the game. That tells the errors and corresponding advantages. Indeed the game won on the errors of the other side is no victory at all. We can put ourselves in the places of the men of the other team, and we can also win the game. That is the job of the one who keeps the Golden Rule. It works here most gloriously of all.

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Here are two men in business. One man has some money. It represents so much hard effort on his part. The other man has a horse. It represents a certain amount of hard effort also. It has a market value. Its owner desires to turn the horse into money that, with money, he may secure other more convenient possessions. He knows what the horse is worth in dollars and cents. He considers himself very fortunate that the man with dollars and cents is looking for an opportunity to exchange a part of it for a horse. So the two come together. And the game of business begins.

"There is my horse. Look him over. Ask any questions you desire and I will answer them honestly. I am ready to give you all the information you desire. All you need to do is to ask for it. When you are through, tell me what you will give. If it is what the horse is worth, pay me the money and you get the horse."

The other man is no fool. He knows horses. He knows all the questions that ought to be asked. But he has been up late the night before and he forgets one very important question. The owner of the horse sees that he has forgotten that question. He sees, too, that the resulting offer is that much too large. Now let him put himself in the place of the other purchaser. Would he not be glad to have someone recall his slip of memory? If he would have some one do that, then even so do ye also unto him. Indeed, do it unto the purchaser even if he, with good knowledge, is selfishly attempting to purchase the horse for less than he is worth. For in

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either case, the owner of the horse, by an application of the Golden Rule, which is more than heathen justice, has won the respect and good-will of the purchaser, keeping him true to the laws of good business.

In either case, a withholding of the Golden Rule loses the respect and good will of the purchaser and lets go the only safe rule of business. "A fine bargain is lost." Yes, but a Christian bargain comes to pass. A man has been kept from falling. His heart is surely not in hard offence. The shame and curse of business, the shame of securing more for an article than it is worth—that has been avoided. Is not that worth all it costs? Indeed is not that the very salvation of business? When the Golden Rule comes into business, greed and selfishness and deception are gone. Cooperative activity for human welfare alone goes on.

Then consider the poor broken souls of earth. Must they be left fallen and defeated? Is there no hope for those who have struggled and failed? Whether with good-will or evil will, they have not proved a match for temptation. Or true to Jesus, they lie prostrate, cut down by the sins of others and tramped beneath the feet of selfish, tyrannical men. Have they no hope? Have we no duty to them? Can we do nothing for them? They cannot rise of themselves. They must have help or they stay there. If helped to their feet, they will take their place among their fellows and work manfully. What principle sets forth our true relation to them? Is it not the Golden Rule? What a

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different world it would be, if all who are on their feet, strong in good works, should put themselves in the place of those who have fallen, and think for a moment of what they might do if help came, and then even so gave that needed help. How quickly the kingdom of God would come on earth.

From the papers comes a refreshing incident out of Yorkshire. There was an earnest Christian who was a barber. He noticed one week a great increase in his volume of business. Upon making inquiry, he found that the barber at the other end of the village was ill. When the week was ended he took all that he had made above his average and carried it to his brother in business, with his Christian sympathy. Is not this the Golden Rule? Could any one be injured by it in any manner of means?

Is not the great sin of this earth the selfish, unconcerned spirit? Is anything more ruinous to self-development, more productive of idleness, than the spirit which withdraws from those who are ignorant? Does not that go contrary to all that is good in education and create an intellectual aristocracy more cruel and tyrannical than the might of kings? Is any grin more satanic and hellish than the one that mars the face of a man when he says, "Watch him kill himself"? or "I thought he would do it. I saw it all the time"? Is anything more heartless than to pass by the man stripped and left half dead?

Is any cry more heart rending than the one from



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hades, "Send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue"? The curse of this earth after all is said and done is the unconcern of those who have of the abundance of wealth and culture and good will, and refuse to give it to those who need:—refuse to keep the Golden Rule. While the most blessed sight this side the pearly gates is a man taking a personal interest in those about him to help them on to a better life; a putting himself in the place of others; a loving and continual application of the Golden Rule to every phase of life.

Some years ago I sat in a car in the Union Railway Station at Denver, waiting for the train to start. I looked out the window and became greatly interested in the work of the trainmen. Up front the expressmen were tumbling on the baggage; trunks and packages and mail bags. At the steps of each car, stood the porters helping the people to board the train. Five minutes before time to leave, one of those big engines bumped up against the train and coupled on ready to go. A moment later I saw the conductor kiss his wife and daughter good-bye and take his place, erect and attentive to all that was going on, like a general in command of an army. Looking up front to the engineer, he smiled and waved his hand in friendly greeting. One minute before starting, I saw him take out his watch and begin to count the seconds as they went by. Five, ten, fifteen, twenty seconds went by. I knew the engineer had his hand on the throttle lever waiting for the

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signal to start. I knew that every switch on our track leading out of the station was closed. We had the right of way. Thirty, forty, fifty seconds went by. The telegraph operator was ready to telegraph down the division that the train had left the station. And all along the way the track would be cleared for the express to pass. Workmen grading and repairing the track would stop for a moment and switch engines would hurry to the side-track. Fifty-five seconds went by. Fifty-eight, sixty—the conductor up with his hand, the engineer opened the throttle, the express agent closed his door, the porters picked up their foot-stools and stepped on their cars, the conductor swung himself on a car as it passed and we were off over the plains of eastern Colorado and western Kansas. All was order and system, cooperation and good-will on that railway. As we sped on swiftly over the prairies, I marveled at the absolute necessity for the application of the Golden Rule in every part of that railroad, from president to section hand. Knowledge of the rules, all of them, and good-will to obey them; watchfulness to avoid mistakes, care to warn those about to make mistakes, readiness to correct the evil from blunders before too late and willingness to help those who have blundered and fallen—These are the elements that make for perfect harmony of operation and that bring peace of mind and security to all who travel.

Just so it is with all God's world. What He purposes is a kingdom of personal wills in intelligent and

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loving relations; each one doing his appointed task and all true to the laws of society. That is all God wants among men. When that time comes, every personal question and every social question will be settled; every individual sin and every social sin will be no more. The Golden Rule will be supreme among men and in men; and that because it is the very nature of life and the rule and will of God.

## CHAPTER X.

### Religion and Miracle

THE two systems of thought outlined on this page, together with the genuine religious experience that should be with either system, are fundamental in any consideration of miracle.

#### THE ORTHODOX PROCEDURE

1. Time is irrelevant. Miracles occur today as always. Writers are miraculously inspired in recording the miracles.

2. The miracles of the Christian religion are real: of others, false.

3. The records are without error.

4. There is certainty and reality only with historic facts. It is facts or nothing.

5. The divine activity beyond human activity includes a miraculous activity.

#### THE SCIENTIFIC PROCEDURE

1. Miracles are in the dim past. The written records are produced years and often centuries after the events. They show little scientific accuracy of observation.

2. The miracles are similar in all religions.

3. The records of many biblical miracles are very evidently false.

4. There is psychic reality and certainty without factual reality.

5. The divine activity beyond human activity is as orderly and scientific as that we observe and understand.

A fact of religious experience in both procedures is: With God's help, we have faith and will to do the impossible and to have health in sickness, life in death and victory in defeat. This is a blessed truth of the life of faith and trust, and very full of comfort. It is most always the experience of those given to the orthodox procedure. It can all the more be the experience of those accepting the scientific procedure. And it must

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be the experience of him who would come safely through the reasoning of this chapter. For the aim of this chapter is to transfer the reader from the orthodox procedure to the scientific procedure and at the same time carry across the common religious experience. For to lose that in the shift from one thought system to another would be a calamity. So, too, it would be a calamity to hold to it only with a formal intellectual grasp. But to have the experience with zeal and enthusiasm in the scientific procedure is a wonderful thing and of ten-fold more value than in the orthodox procedure.

### (a) BIBLICAL EXPLANATION OF THE MIRACLES OF JESUS

The eighth and ninth chapters of Matthew set forth Jesus as the wonder-worker. There are three incidental matters in those chapters, namely, (1) chap. 8:18-22. Discipleship is exacting. There is no time for delay and it means nowhere to lay one's head. (2) Having cast out the demons, the swine rush down headlong into the sea and Jesus is invited to leave those parts. Property comes before the gracious work of healing. If Christianity means the destroying of stocks and bonds even in breweries and distilleries, then please let Jesus depart. And (3) Matthew, called, gives a feast, (chap. 9:9-17). Those who fast complain that Jesus' disciples fast not when all the others fast often. But the answer is that when Jesus

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is present there is nothing but joy. The religious practice of fasting has no place. It is broken as an old wine skin filled with new wine, or torn as old cloth patched with new. These three things are incidental. The great theme is the nine miracles.

These miracles are grouped with purpose in three groups of three each. There are, chap. 8:1-17; three miracles of healing. The leper, the one sick of palsy, and Peter's wife's mother sick of a fever. Then follow, chap. 8:23-9:8; three miracles of authority and power. The sea is calmed, the demons are cast out and sins are forgiven. Then third, come three miracles of restoration, chap. 9:18-34; see also chap. 12:22, 24. The daughter of Jairus is raised to life, two blind men are given sight and the deaf man hears. These nine miracles in groups of three follow directly the Sermon on the Mount. The teaching of Jesus has been presented. Now come the works of Jesus. And these signs and wonders are carefully selected and arranged to show that Jesus did them to fulfill prophetic utterance as, "He bore our diseases." They were to illustrate also the author's statement that Jesus went about all Galilee "teaching and preaching and healing." They are brought forth in defence of Jesus as the Saviour of the Jews. In the midst of wonder-workers, he was the master. Being able to do these things in line with Jewish prophecy, believe him and remain true. In line with the reasoning of the times, "Who can do these wonders?" None but God and



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those coming from God and receiving divine aid. That was the argument never to be changed and reversed till modern times. How does miracle relate itself to Jesus today?

### (b) WONDERWORKING IN HUMAN HISTORY.

A short statement of the part played in human life by wonders and signs will be a good beginning here. To the ancient, most everything was miraculous. They lived and moved in an atmosphere of wonder. There was a tropical luxuriance of miraculous events. An orderly, harmonious, related universe, under law and system, which is the creation and expression of God, was little thought of or known. Eclipses, earthquakes, thunder, lightning, rainbows, deluges, accidents, diseases, good and bad fortunes, etc., were the work of spirits impassioned like men. As, for instance in China, they stick with pins the body of a person overcome with fever in order to drive away the evil spirit. Each tree and stone has its spirit. Ignorance and imagination unguided by reason had full control. And besides these things in which all believed, there were the inventions of sorcerers, priests, magicians, astrologers, soothsayers, and diviners. Then add to these things, that absolute religious confidence, that an all-good God was ready to answer and help one in any miraculous way, and you have the atmosphere of the marvelous into which all people, religious or not, had been immersed. Divination was supreme and the diviner was chief among men.

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These were the places to find divine manifestations. All else was unrelated to God. And the Jews were no exception to this condition.

Now, while the condition is completely reversed in modern times, the divine manifestations being in the natural course of events, we are not entirely free from these things. What man will begin an undertaking on Friday? Who will take room Thirteen in a hotel? What efficacy at certain times there is in rice and old shoes. Who eats chicken without the solemn ceremony of breaking the wish bone? Why plant potatoes in the dark of the moon? We have a sign for this and that and the other event. Old imaginings come down to us from the childhood of the race. In spite of our best judgment, they come before us or creep into our fancy and determine our actions. Sometimes they shame us as in the witch-craft delusions. We expect something, outside of the orderly, regular course, to come to pass for us and by divine power. Something above and beyond will interpose for us in a special way. And this hocus-pocus reveals to us what it is.

So through all Jewish and Christian history, these corruptions are manifest. We explain by the ordinary course of nature most of the miracles of the period of the Exodus and of Elijah and Elisha. But it was not so once. And to the wonders of the Bible have been added those of Medieval times. They are a great burden even yet, especially to the Catholic Church. It is hard to get at the historic facts. Even as they are

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seen to be false, they are hard to be rid of. Luther at the Diet of Worms was pleading for the truth when it thundered, seemingly out of a clear sky. Each party claimed it was God's voice condemning the other party. All along in the church, images and charms have been held sacred and able to work good for men. Bowing before images and touching relics have disgraced and even today disgrace and corrupt true worship in Christian churches. At Lourdes, France, it is admitted recently by the defenders of the shrine, that only eighteen out of eight thousand were cured in the year. Sacred shrines obscure the spirit life as ever. While an unchristian and unscientific denomination increases its numbers by emphasizing the cure of the body as the soul of Christianity. Happy will be the day when the belief and practice of wonderworking is no more in Christianity.

A remarkable instance of all this in our day is *An Inquiry Into Faith Healing*, (reported in the *Outlook*, 1921). A committee in Vancouver carefully followed up three hundred and fifty cases of healing done there by Rev. C. S. Price the year before. Only five were found to be cures. This committee was composed of eleven ministers, eight doctors, three college professors of scientific attainments and a prominent lawyer. About fifty diseases were included in the three hundred and fifty cases. Mr. Price declared his treatment was faith healing and that divine power was directly operating, according to the faith of the patient.

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The patients who benefitted were those who had functional trouble rather than organic. And these troubles arise from nervous and mental conditions which are subjective rather than physical. They are not at all like tuberculosis or cancer. So quite reasonably, they are cured by the proper mental and spiritual condition. All of which is nothing miraculous but quite scientific and explainable. Further, many received help by the great optimism and hope aroused. This, however, had its unfortunate reactions. In nine cases, insanity, ultimately followed the treatment. Thirty cases resulted in marked depression when permanent cures failed. Death resulted in thirty cases. One young woman sick of diabetes, stopped medical aid and died. Seventeen others were distinctly worse because of the same neglect of medical treatment. Two hundred and fifteen cases showed no positive results.\*

All which brings out the fact that there is hope for many a sick person in a happy mental and spiritual adjustment which has nothing miraculous about it. The normal mental life works for normal physical functioning. But this is not the contention of the healer. He "openly and tactically ignored" these divine laws revealed by medical science. He "disregarded good sense, sound morals and genuine religion." And he did so, claiming to work wonders similar to those recorded in

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\*As I write this, there comes to my notice in the daily paper the picture of Rev. Dr. ——— of Denver Col. The Doctor stands with hands laid on the head of a little boy always a cripple, who takes his first step after this touch of the faith healer. I wonder what a critical evaluation would bring forth, etc., etc.

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the Bible and elsewhere as pointed out above. This sort of thing, we never can attribute to Jesus, no matter how many records are brought forth. The strong personality of Jesus no doubt fairly radiated peace of mind and health of body and soul. And we are quite ready to grant him a keen insight into physical health in relation to the normal mental life far beyond the knowledge of that time. But whatever events occurred as a result we are unwilling to allow to be beyond a reasonable explanation and repetition. Our task here is to explain his relation to the record and to our experience.

How Jesus reacted toward this world of magic and wonderworking, this confidence in the divinity of immediate changes, this control of demons and sin, it is not hard to tell in the light of his parables and teachings. For these all emphasize the divineness of the natural, gradual evolutionary changes in the body as everywhere. All reveals his trust in the slow developmental processes. This is at great contrast to his reported wonderworking. It is hardly possible that he could have done both. The best of reasoning never has reconciled the two even to this day.

Yet here was this popular superstition. He was impatient to yield to it at all, and often refused to do so. And it appears that he got on with it as best he could; throwing his whole soul into the great revelation of love and life which once grown strong in men would in time outgrow and cast off this mystic illusion. For

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the people then did not consider wonderworking as a violation of law. They did not even know the law violated. And most of the wonders recorded actually clear up as we bring in the law pertinent. Furthermore, with them, disease and its cure was all an ecclesiastical matter. Sin and demons caused disease. Therefore it was the job of the spiritual worker to deal with the sin and the demon. They were perfectly logical as is China and India in their superstitious, cruel notions and malpractice.

Our development of medical science marks a marvelous and heroic victory over that pitiable confusion and error. With this victory, we are sure Jesus is in accord. And we are just as sure he is at war with a revival of the old malpractice as well as the modern corruption of it in the half-baked ideas of actually healing the body by faith. If the modern so-called faith healers were true to the ancient scripture theory they would aim to cast out the evil spirit and do away with the sin first and not skip over this to act on the body directly. What this mental, spirit effect upon the body for health really is, psychology alone can and does truly tell us.

### (c) THE COMMON EXPLANATION TODAY.

The first thing to be observed in this world of wonder and miracle described thus briefly, and into which Jesus came, is that the reality in it all is not the events said to have taken place but the absolute certainty in



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the minds of those who are said to have experienced them or to have witnessed them, that they are real. This was the great reality. I mention this here in order to bring it before us later on. It is a part of the brief description. Let it rest a moment.

A large majority of the Christian people of all faiths look upon the world of miracle in this way: First a distinction is made and the great mass of the miracles of historic records are cast aside as unreal. This goes so far as to include many of those in the Bible and most of those in the Old Testament. Only a few are left and accepted. They center about Jesus. They seem to have sufficient evidence to put them beyond question. The witnesses are trustworthy and sufficient to make them real facts of life. And they are so interwoven with other unquestioned events, to reject them is to reject the whole social activity.

Then second, the good purpose seen is a fine support. They are done not to see one's self do a big stunt. They are not with an aim to astound the witnesses and turn their devotion to the exaltation of the one who did them. They are to relieve human misery and point to complete mastery of life and the world. Jesus was moved with compassion for suffering humanity. So he did the wonder and always turned the mind of the witnesses to the faith lying behind it all. Many times he refused to do it when they failed to recognize this basic element. His high aim was to lead them to the Father in trust and loyalty. This purpose is not the

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one pointed out by the author of the book of Matthew. For he makes it the fulfillment of Old Testament writings and the divinity of Jesus. Both of which we reject as entirely unworthy of Jesus. A divinity doing stunts is small business.

Third, they are all true to some higher diviner law than we yet know or may ever know. But many of them we shall surely understand by and by. "The miracles of today are the common things of tomorrow." As they are a divine activity even when done by men, being a special privilege to certain individuals which they even do not understand, it is quite reasonable they should be beyond human understanding, at least for the present. The law and order of the world must be recognized but there is a diviner activity in this order which we call the miraculous. Into this activity we may some day get a glimpse. Besides this, many miracles as those of the Exodus are already found to be regular natural events. Many more will be understood later on. We are just at the beginning of understanding God's world.—Thus goes the reasoning of most Christians; very much of truth in it all. But unwittingly, especially in the last statement, the reasoning undermines itself, doing away with the very nature of the unusual, the special, the supernatural, the miraculous, and bringing all under one great orderly, systematic activity. The only thing left is that occasionally a part of that activity seems to us mortals to go contrary to another part, breaking into it and

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setting it aside for a moment that a higher purpose may be realized. Even this on closer analysis is seen to be a common thing of nature.

### (d) THE MINORITY VIEW.

For this reasoning, so helpful and assuring to so many, I desire to substitute another. An ever increasing minority desires to go farther and to go by a little different way. They proceed on the basis that all reality is understandable and explainable. With the others, they are aware that most of the things called miracles, both Biblical and those of all history, are already clearly explained as orderly events.\* But with regard to the remainder, they part company. The majority assert that they are events true to some unknown higher law. While the minority grant this may be so in some further instances not yet explained, especially in functional diseases. Still, when all investigation is over, there are left many miracles, such

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\*V. G. Simkhovitch in his *Toward the Understanding of Jesus* [C. 4, p. 30] says of the times of Jesus: "The tension bordered on hysteria; as is indicated in the eschatological literature of the time and by the prevalence of nervous maladies among the people . . . This great nervous strain was a part of the crisis. Orthodoxy and heterodoxy were greatly intensified. It is precisely such a crisis that leads the many to the borders of hysteria or to nervous anomalies of one kind or another, and that leads the few to the most extraordinary social, intellectual and moral achievements."

Now this observation can be made of many moments in human history. People are wrought up beyond endurance in the awful conflicts and angry cross currents of intensely earnest groups of men. Emotions break, nerves snap and the mind whirls. And the great souls at such a crisis struggle to set men right. Many hysterical people are calmed and set right. Such seem to be miraculously healed by an inner faith created by the personal contact with the great soul. I have not the slightest doubt hundreds were so affected by the wonderful Jesus. The malady may have been a physical or mental or moral and religious derangement, any one or all together. All which is quite understandable to the mental and religious psychologist. So the story goes, and the longer it goes before it is written down the wider will be its application, until organic diseases are included with functional. Even the dead are raised.

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as those connected with organic diseases and the restoration of physical life to the dead, which the minority insist are not facts of life, real and concrete historic events, such as Washington crossing the Delaware. They do not belong to the "fact part" of human life, but their explanation must be found elsewhere.

With this minority, there is at once recognized as a part of human experience a realm of unreality where mental ideals, hallucinations and dreams and inner certainty abide, but where concrete reality in material things of time and space does not come. In this realm is placed that element which is miraculous in the events with which we are now concerned.\* The same inner consciousness of conviction and certainty may be created either by the concrete reality or by this spontaneous idealistic activity. This is the realm of the dramatic art and idealistic literature. It is the poetry of life. The same effect is produced by proper arrangements either way. The spirit of the person is active in the idealistic realm and active in the same way as in the midst of concrete material things of time and space. This is especially the case in the realm of love and in the inner religious life. People moved to a conviction of a personal perfection in Christian

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\*The fact that the greatest miracles of Jesus, such as the virgin birth, the healing miracles, the resurrection and ascension, are identical with those of the other great prophets such as Chrishna and Buddha, need not concern us here. We may conclude those attributed to Jesus are simply borrowed. And all miracles of all times and religions may be simply the inventions of the followers of the prophets long years after they lived, and attributed to them—a thing we Christians readily agree was the case in the non-Christian religions. Yet, no matter. Still, we must explain the fact of such inventions everywhere. How came these in their experience? How came the certainty in their religious consciousness and in the religious consciousness of good men today?

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love bear testimony to that as though it were a concrete reality. Their real life of concrete moral deeds is quite faulty and often morally contradictory. Others, seeing this, deny their testimony. Their trouble is, they do not distinguish the two realms of human life. They have been immersed in a mass of idealistic teachings. They have the inner sincerity as a result. They transfer this to the other realm of concrete reality and bear testimony of it as such. This testimony, practical folks deny. This can be observed in millions of Christian people, and especially in religious practices of such nations as India. It can also be observed in every phase of human life.

We live in spirit a thousand idealistic conceptions before we have one concrete realization in material things of time and space. When we have that reality it is always imperfect, but it is real and very living. It is where our spirits are intended to be while on earth. But it does not exclude the other idealistic and mental activity of human life. That miracles have no place in the realm of living and concrete reality which becomes historic fact, this minority forever insist. That they have a place in the other realm is the only other possibility. Here the battle line is drawn. The majority insist on keeping them in the realm of concrete reality. The minority challenge it. And the fuller knowledge of psychic life begins to sustain them in their contention. If once they make clear their position the mat-

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ter will be settled and Christianity saved from a teaching and practice wholly unchristian.

These folks recognize, as the majority, a material and spiritual world of order and law as the revelation of the very nature of God in all his activity. But this conception does not agree with the old conception of the same in two particulars, against which men revolted and because of which miracles seemed reasonable and necessary. If this world of law is a hard, cold, cruel, unchanging mechanism then God help us by a miracle. We must have it. But it is not a blind and complicated machine in which we are bound and which works on, turning the same today as ever and always going on as started. That is not law and order. Law is simply how we act, how God acts. It is the nature of living. The material world is seen to be also, not a cold dead stuff, but a changing activity. It all analyzes step by step to one primal activity which approaches more and more a personal activity.

The scientist himself, by his own road, has come to see his own realm a world whose laws are alive and feel as much as the power and life going through them. The things he calls laws and principles are changing, living things; growing and developing all the time. They are not perfect and dead molds into which the stream of life powers is poured and moulded. They are not the banks of the stream between which flows the river of life. They are the nature of life and a part



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of the onward flowing. They are laid down and gathered up as it flows along.

This being the case, men and God are not conceived of as bound as slaves to some law and order that was made perfect at first and has never been changed. We do not submit to a law. We are above it. We are supreme. Both law and material things must yield to that supremacy. As in democracy, law is not imposed upon us from above. It is our creation. The officers of the law are our servants. We are the officers and the law ourselves. So in the larger conceptions of world relations. "The world do move." We are all alive, emphatically just now, in our forms of living. We are not perfect. We are living, living fast and high. The mental conception of a perfect order and a perfect God is gone. That needs special providences for men and things to help them out of tight pinches and terrible situations. In its place comes a living, feeling universe, not going on to perfection or aiming at it, but simply busy in living. The law and order is life, not perfection. To describe this life is our task. In it, we will see the things called miracles.

Now we are personalities. We are spirits living a spirit life, in material things and in concrete and real experiences. We are in time. We are also in eternity at the same time. This spirit has its idealism and its concrete reality. In both realms it has the element of mastery, of victory, of will supreme. This is the largest element of personality, and personal activity. If

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one loses the spirit of victory he dies. Life is a blessed journey of battle and victory. That is the story of humanity.

It begins in a confused and uncertain activity and goes on to an orderly reality. The individual spirit must never give up to any condition that denies its supremacy. That is defeat and death. The personality must be winning out all the time in order to live. If concrete life spells defeat, the spirit of the man must not give up. He must maintain his victory in the ideal. He may be fighting a losing battle in that reality but not in spirit. Let him think he is right and has won. Let him faith this victory and keep on doing so. It may take concrete form by and by. Let the Blue and the Gray march together. The defeated must not give up. His spirit is not dead—His back may be broken, his muscles spent in old age; but see him, he can fight as well as ever. His thinking and believing he can fight gives him personal supremacy, keeps him in authority.

It is a terrible thing when a nation or a party has wholly lost heart, "lost face."—The little fellow is helping his daddy work. At the end of the day he says "We did it." He is told he did it. He did do it in spirit. Who dare kill him by telling him he didn't? He is not so good in the concrete reality. But in spirit, he is the match for his father. He sees the airplane and is determined to run one when he is big. He has

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not a doubt that he may fall. It is wicked to tell him that some of them come down quickly and die.

### (e) ILLUSTRATIONS.

Now illustrations of this are many and in all phases of human activity. To trace the personality, always victorious, as it begins and goes on in its own way is very profitable. For the matter in hand, it is indispensable. Analogous thought will make the connection and lead up to the conclusion. Let us begin with motherhood and life. See it in the two realms just pointed out.

(1) The little girl with her doll is the unreal, the fancy, the ideal world. It may be a rag doll, ugly and shapeless. No matter. A large amount of clumsy attention and care is lavished upon it. While it laughs and cries, wakes and sleeps, and has all the moods and actions of a real baby. It is all a fancy, dreamy activity. The only reality is in the inner personality of the child. There is achievement and victory. She thinks she does it just as well as mother. And on through youth till the realities and responsibilities of motherhood are come. The one precedes the other but is not the basis of it. The line between the two is not sharply drawn. The one thing common to the fancies and dreams and also the later reality is the personal attitude aroused. That is as conscious and real and sincere in the one case as the other.

(2) Observe the horoscope and the effort to foretell events as it has come to the place of reliable setting

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forth of the future. It was a blind groping out after the future to begin with. Folks, however, believed the foreteller. He took himself just as seriously as men today. Whether it was the weather or the stars or human events he felt he was getting at it all. Yet it was a blind beating of the air. Not so now. We tell the future weather conditions with scientific accuracy. We locate a planet one hundred and fifty years hence. We describe the future actions of men to a nicety. We foretell the possibilities and moral character of a child and the course of nations. But we are no more consciously convinced we are right than they were, rolling their horoscopes and noting signs. Yet we walk straight to the mark while they stagger blindly on hitting nothing real. Theirs was in the world of dreams and ideals. Ours is that world made real in material things.

(3) Strangely mixed potions and senseless cruelties to the body precede modern medical achievements. The one was a bold guessing. The other is a sure treatment. Yet the assurance of results is no greater today than ever. The spirits of men were not intended to give up to disease. They never have. The only difference is we have made real that inner conviction. They groped around and failed outwardly in the real material relations. We are succeeding. Out of confusion comes an orderly way. So it is better to live today. If one gained health with them it was a miracle. With us, health is an orderly development.

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(4) Angels, a real sky and heaven above it were the astrologers' first efforts at things beyond this world. But now the astronomer has an orderly universe. He is beginning to see connections clearly. A vast unlimited expanse opens before him. Heaven as a place with angels flying to us is a child's notion to life with God in his great universe. Messengers from God to men, flying swiftly and quickly are out of the question. We are left to the real practical problem of genuine spirit communion, men with God. Spirit answers to Spirit in truth and ethical life, in a natural way that we understand. We have no place for special messengers. That would crash into the moral order in a violent and sinful way.

(5) So, too, in the moral realm, the victory of the soul over sin. At first it was simply a hand to hand problem and the work of a moment only. Character building required but a day. No clear lines were drawn. Mechanical processes were most evident. Yet from the first to last, the inner victory was just as conscious and certain. The struggle was blind and unreasoned. Men who lied before they went to meeting and after they came out, live in the meeting in the realm of conscious victory over lies and so bear testimony. Some day maybe it will be with them a rational, orderly practical, moral reality. It will be more than ideal. For many are winning in a living way today. It is no miraculous escape from sin to righteousness. We guide, knowingly, the individual to a good life

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free from sin. Ideally, I have been living for twenty years in a saloonless country. Really, my spirit has experienced the practical space and time material setting but a few years. My personal conviction was as strong first as last.

Occasionally, such personal victory in ideal form became so strong in such folks as Mrs. Carrie Nation that she makes it real in a hatchet campaign. While we were in the first stage, there were the special providences and the unusual things, the signs and wonders. Now that we are growing sober men there is no chance for miracles. In the realm of real things there is law and order. The whole moral realm is the most orderly thing we have. The personal victory over sin in inner motive is all along. The soul consciousness is the same. The concrete reality in historic fact in the end only and when it has worked itself out in regular form.

A man who had been a cursing wicked man told me of his instantaneous conversion and transformation of character and swore as he talked. His victory was a personal, conscious, ideal thing. To become real in self-mastery would take him the usual time and require the usual, testing, practical experiences. There is no short cut in the real. In his first confused efforts he had a number of experiences he could describe as miraculous. Changed men from bad to good are not changed in the real by irregular processes.

(6) Now in religion, the spirit relations of God and men. And in the Christian religion where those



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relations are moralized and rationalized. What a field for the miraculous. There, faith is the breath of the soul, and love its life blood. Is there any order and law in the mastery of these things? Religion to be real becomes so when enmeshed in moral action. Otherwise it is mystical and pure idealism.

The Christian perfectionist is companion of the idealist priest of India. And there are a lot of those folks in the Christian church. With them, miracles in religion are no uncommon thing. But the man whose religion is rationalized and moralized in the way set forth by Jesus, does not testify to miracles in his experience. He is living a real orderly life without special privileges and events impossible to explain. It is the first uncertain and confused efforts to come out of the ideal realm and gain a living, concrete, orderly reality that are miraculous. When they fail or are buffeted they will not have it so. They are arrived in short cut order. Which simply means their spirits are, in inner ideal personal life, victorious, and they faith the concrete thing into reality. It is a mighty poor courtship where lovers have not each other in ideal possession long before the wedding day. That is the miracle of human affection. Yet reality comes only in marriage and home, the historic event.

(7) A few years ago, I found a young lady's name on the records of the church. She had been an intelligent and useful Sunday School teacher. Tuberculosis brought her low. Seeking relief in Christian Sci-

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ence, she was reported to have found it. I called on her at her work. For she was brave and would not give up. I found her in the last stages of the disease. Yet she persisted in denying that she was sick. She had found out she thought how to keep up her fighting spirit during her last days. She was trying to make herself think all was well in spite of the facts.

"O, but I am not sick," she insisted. "I am not going to die. I am perfectly well."

"You may be well in spirit," I answered. "But you are very far gone in body. I admire your spirit not to give up. If you did you might not last the day out."

A week later she gave up work and in another week died. She never admitted to me that she was sick. But to her closest friend she declared after a bad hemorrhage, "That is the way it will be. Some day soon, I will have a hemorrhage more severe than any other and it will all be over. I will go slipping out of this world into the next."

What was it all but the victory of faith? Her spirit would not give up. She prolonged her days by personal will to live on. Disease even in death was defeated. She called her life a miraculous deliverance from the power of disease. A better understanding does not make it miraculous. She maintained health only in the ideal.

(8) Some time ago there lived a bold sea-captain named Paul Jones. He was captain of a ship with

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few soldiers. He fought a three hour fight. Before the fight was over, his ship was sinking. Yet he fought on. The odds were against him in the concrete real world. But not so in the spirit. He was master of all there. And he pushed that inner personal victory over the other captain till he surrendered. In a little while the concrete realization was an historic fact. How could inferior material forces conquer superior forces? They cannot do it. That would be miraculous. It was called so once. But it was not so. It was always, as here, a battle of personal spirit convictions. Jones had his victory before he went into the fight. And this spirit certainty soon made him able to win the concrete material reality.

(9) James W. Bashford, president of Ohio Wesleyan University and Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, used to give testimony in substance as follows:\* He was sick unto death. There were a few moments when the doctors and friends watching by his side were uncertain whether he were dead or alive. When he had recovered he stated that he had this conversation with Jesus. Thrice he asked if he might not come to him and thrice he was refused. Being so definitely refused, he asked when he might come and was told that he could not come till his work was done. His work was not done. When it was done he surely might come. All which was great comfort to him. No doubt ever arose about that con-

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\*James W. Bashford by G. R. Grose, p. 34.

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versation with Jesus. It was as clear and certain to him as any experience in his life. Yet he was unable to state whether or not it was a real historic experience in the actual relations of himself and Jesus or simply a product of his mind in its idealistic activity. Which-ever it was, the certainty and value of the experience to him was unaffected.—I wonder if this helps in considering the testimony of the witnesses of the wonder-working of Jesus?

(10) From Cox, McKay, Good and Livingston comes the shout of victory, "Let a thousand fall but let not Africa be given up." Centuries before the reality, they had the victory in spirit. To them, Africa, after centuries of Christian growth, was Christian already. Many a time they had to pinch themselves to make sure it was not a concrete reality.

(11) Some fifteen years ago, I caught the vision of a graded Sunday School, an historical Bible and religious education in the large sense. Then with others leading, I helped fashion a graded course. Then I plunged in to make the personal, ideal victory (all a mental achievement) real in a concrete Sunday School. It was so real to me I had it before time. Fool that I was I thought it could be real before even other folks had the ideal. Their material and concrete life would be subject to my spirit of victory. I followed my ideal—a very foolish thing to do. And I did win one family, where the soil was ready, and one young lady of it. Her class, she made a concrete real-

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ization and had marvelous success. But the District Superintendent and the other hide-bound conservatives—when they got through with me—well, as usual, you know the story of such things during those years.

The spirit has never died in me. And now I look over the program of the Ohio State Council of Religious Education and it is all very much there among the every day Sunday School workers. How many times I have dreamed it all out to the last detail. The point I make is, that had I won at first it would have been a real miracle. Had I been as the popular evangelist I would have claimed all along the results now realized. And the point to all these words is this: The thing called miracle belongs in the realm of ideal spirit victory. It is in that state they all are said to occur.

Second, they are reported always as concrete realization of this, in living form, yet contrary to that orderly life. They are set into it as events we catalog as historic when they come to realization as such by a special way. While my contention is that they are sincerely reported as such but not rightly so. They are experiences not real but ideal. And when kept in that realm they are perfectly natural and quite orderly and true to psychic laws now coming to the attention of men. Believe in them? Yes. In their proper place surely. As concrete historic realities. No. And a careful reading of the record in the light of psychic laws now known confirms this conclusion. They are not false to life. They are true to the idealistic life

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experiences. Among them is their setting. The part Jesus played in them and the extent, if any at all, to which he shared in this idealizing of witnesses and writers we may never know.

Nor may we be able, at least for the present, to isolate completely so as to know the kernel of fact in the act or word of Jesus that became the basis or raw material for the testimony and record. And it is not necessary to know these things in order to evaluate the miracle.

What we need today is to free ourselves from the miraculous in our experience, as a fact of reality. That done, we are able to evaluate it in its proper place.

\*(12) One other illustration of this idealistic activity in personal achievement, and that a remarkable one with all the proper oriental and mystical setting—the wonderful conversion of Sadhu Sundar Singh. For many days, after he had been properly instructed by the Christian missionary and the reading of the Christian Bible, the conflict between the Indian mystic religion and the religion of Jesus in the moral truth of love and righteous living went on. It was a severe struggle with all the bitter experiences of breaking high caste ties.

The natural mystic (for Singh has long seasons of four hours each day of solitary meditation and prayer) desired to live the life of love. It was the pearl of great price; charming his deeply religious nature. Is it any

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\*According to Julius Richter, Berlin University.



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wonder he comes to his decision in a miraculous way? Not at all. Being an oriental mystic and familiar with the oriental miracles of the Bible, his personal experience of the fellowship of Jesus in love and peace could not be anything else. He, too, must see Jesus, as Paul and the other apostles. Wrought up to the highest pitch of inner, subjective excitement, it is quite natural that, on the night when he stated, "Before morning I will have made my decision," Jesus should have appeared to him and said, "I died for thee, too." His decision is made at once. Conscious inner certainty arises. Conviction beyond debate or question possesses him. And he goes forth to proclaim his Saviour, to live the life of love and to follow his Saviour's moral teachings. All of which is true to form. But we are not fooled as to the real historic fact of Jesus appearing to him in physical form and audible voice. Not at all. Jesus came to his soul as he comes to you and me, in spirit and in truth. The evidence of which is, with Singh as with us, that our lives conform to the true moral and human relations which Jesus experienced among men.

Further evidence of this subjective, idealistic activity of Sundar Singh is revealed in his story of finding a saintly old man in a cave up in the mountains of Tibet, with whom he states, with all apparent sincerity, he holds blessed communion.

This old man was one time the Bishop of Alexandria, 270 A.D. In Diocletian's time, he was imprisoned,

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but was miraculously delivered. And he then fled to this cave and has lived there ever since. He is always willing to take anyone who may question the truth of his story to see his sainted friend. Some have even gone with him up the mountain, but have fainted by the way. The climb has always proved too severe for the traveler. Singh's powers of endurance have soon gone beyond the endurance of the doubter. The cave is always farther up the mountain than anyone has as yet been able to go. So he can still talk, without witnesses to the contrary, of his friend in the cave.—Would that some experienced mountain climber would accept his invitation and go as far up as he is able to go.

But then is it really worth while? It might shake the certainty in the soul of Singh and spoil what is, in spite of and aside from his mysticism, in a real way a true minister of Jesus Christ; enduring persecution more severe than comes to most followers of Jesus. We need no such investigations. We have sufficient human experience with which to settle the matter. Further than that touch-stone of reality we need not go. Here in the soul of this man Singh, we have a remarkable instance of how certain a man may be that an experience, entirely subjective, is as real as any historic fact of life.

### (f) REALITY THE ONLY TEST OF CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

One thing further. When we come to formal relations of men, we are in the realm of concrete reality.

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Such relations are events of life that are historic. If we confine our tests of one another to that, we can put our fingers on things that are real. Other spiritual relations are there to be sure and tremendously effective, but they are in the spirit, and sacredly so. Hands off. That is way back behind this we realize. We can testify of it if we will. By metaphor we can know what it is in a way. But the concrete real life is enough to test one another by. In this realm we are commended by Jesus many things. His teachings and his deeds true to moral laws, in a word, his practical real love of men and living, filial devotion to the Father. These things we may all live over again. We can be little sons of God in being true to life as He puts it. We can experience the Beatitudes and the Golden Rule in practical concrete reality. But the other things that cannot be experienced, no one dare require of men.

I believe in an experiential religion. Have an experience and tell others about it. When they report to me that Jesus was condemned, crucified, dead and buried, and yet lives on working with the Father, I believe it. It is real to me because I can experience it all and do experience it as my life goes on. But when they say his body came out of the grave after death, I cannot experience that. I have never known of anyone who has experienced it or can do so. Therefore no one has a right to test my Christian experience by that. Things contrary to human experience may not be de-

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manded of human beings. And this, too, regardless of their being true or false.

### (g) CONCLUSIONS

(1) Now read the miracles of the Bible a second time. We know what these things are today in relation to those performing them, those experiencing them, those witnessing them and those evaluating them. We feel sure, Jesus in our present experience of his fellowship, does not mean the wonder-worker told of in the Bible records.

We also see that his true fellowship with them in that first century is not broken or destroyed in the least if miracle is removed. We see also the record is the report by others of the testimony of these witnessing friends. How much of it is exact and accurate report of an historic fact we are unable to decide completely. How much of it represents a misunderstanding of what Jesus said and did or how far he partook of their own inner certainty as described above is also unknown.

Of this only we are sure. These things are not inside the realm of personal, concrete, human experience where they are said to be. That fact causes and justifies the arguments and explanations. My own experience of Jesus puts them outside this concrete, personal experience and makes them the product of the idealistic phase of religious life of his time and wrongly fastened upon him. The heavens do not fall in this conclusion. For me they stand more secure.

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(2) There are three things further which should be mentioned here. One is that the line of reasoning drawn above will never appeal to anyone until he has substituted for his certainty in the instantaneous and miraculous transformations a firm conviction in the slow, natural life processes. When that once grips him he will turn quickly from miracle. And he would better never turn till that moment arrives. However, he better do much to usher it in.

Another thing is the devotion of the crowd to its leader. When this is strong, as it is in the case of the followers of Jesus, they will hold to anything reported concerning the leader if it is said to be a help or a blessing to anyone. They just as intensely repudiate any criticism or suggestion of inability of their leader to meet every issue, no matter whether it is just and true or not. To deny absolute perfection to Jesus or to hold that he went through a process of growth is at once stamped as heresy.

Jesus as divine and God as conceived by them are past any such living development. Life as applied to Jesus and God does not mean what it does when applied to men. The living God is not a growing personality as our own, but static. And so the divinity of Jesus is a static thing. There is no place for thought development or change in a course of action, and above all, there is no place for a mistake or fault or uncertain venture. Experience worked no transformation. All such is tramped down in their zeal. Yet it seems

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to me there can be the same zeal which is an excellent thing, without blind prejudice. Indeed it would surely be a better zeal. Jesus would come a little closer to us.

And a third matter, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, is the spirit to do the impossible thing. This follows at once the first thing of conscious certainty just referred to. No matter how impossible the matter at hand, it can be done. Such great faith had the centurian that miles of distance mattered not. Just speak the word and life will return. It can be done. Leprosy is not incurable. Even death is conquerable. The spirit of doing the impossible is a fine thing and must not be lost. I believe it is strongest with those conquering the world by scientific research and discovery. Put the task before them and they are ready at once to advance to the attack. When men are called away from miracle to the orderly understandable life, they do not lose but strengthen their conviction that it can be done.



## CHAPTER XI.

### The New Mysticism

**N**OW again the miracle stories are all before us. Also such statements as are found in Matthew, chap. 3:16, 17; chap. 4:11; chap. 11:27; chap. 17:1-8; chaps. 24 and 25; the common interpretation of chap. 26:36-46; also the philosophical mysticism running through all the book of John—chap. 1:29; chap. 3:27; chap. 6:52-59; chap. 8:28, 29; chap. 14; also the misconceptions of the metaphors, "The Bread of Life," "The Living Water," "The Vine And The Branches," "The Light of the World," "I am in the Father and the Father in me."

Mysticism is the experience of striving to experience what is outside the circle of experience. Therefore its permanent results in human life are little or nothing. Those wholly engaged in such exercises mark time and become aliens to humanity. They do nothing to enlarge the circle of experience. They are far separated from the true mystic of human experience, the man of vision, the genius who sees the land beyond, the next step ahead in human experience and strives to realize it. For instance:

There is the belief in the charm of precious stones. The jasper saves from drowning. The topaz wards off

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sudden death. The ruby is an amulet against sadness. There are beneficent properties in birth stones. Born in June wear an agate. Born in July wear a ruby; in September, a crysolite; in October, an opal, etc. Now one may give himself with great zeal to these mysterious so-called powers of precious stones, till he would become a mystic par excellence. He might strive very much to realize these hidden powers. They are inexplicable and outside all understood properties of such stones. Quite a mysticism in theory and practice could be built up. It would all be outside what we call real human experience. It would be purely an unreal psychic and spiritual activity of the individual. And he who gives himself to it, because it lacks reality, lives an empty and sinful life.

On the other hand the men who work with and investigate the precious stones build up considerable knowledge of their properties and relations. Such is a real scientific knowledge verifiable in our real human experience. Such are the facts: Diamonds are pure carbon and will burn as coal. Pearls are two percent water. They require careful attention lest they dry and lose their color. Turquoise blue is in danger of turning a pale green. Acids tarnish gold, etc. But beyond this volume of knowledge very much is unknown. How make diamonds out of carbon? No doubt there stretches out before the man wisest in the knowledge of precious stones a vast ocean of undiscovered facts and scientific truth. This is all a mys-

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tery and whoever contemplates it is the true mystic in that realm. It is the mystery of the road not yet traveled, the only true mystery in human experience.

Now there is no purpose in this chapter to deal with the mystery religions; neither in estimating them nor in comparing them with Christianity to determine how much of their mysticism was carried over into Christianity. We know, from those who have done this work, that very much, both in thought and practice, was so carried across.

S. Angus in his *Mystery Religions and Christianity* (p. 256), quotes Richard Baxter: "A man must be a very obdurate Sadducee who would not believe in witchcraft." And as late as 1760, he said to John Wesley, "Giving up witchcraft is in effect giving up the Bible." Mysticism is here in Christianity and we grant a certain kind of reality to it all. Madam Guyon settles that beyond all question. The mysteries are real phenomena. But the distinction to be raised here is that such phenomena are not original in any way with Jesus or any of his followers. They were all here when he came. The religion of Jesus goes on without them; is better off without them. Indeed from the first, there was opposition to them.

Paul met them many a time. (See p. 252 of the book just quoted) "When we consider the powerful and popular combination of the Mysteries, Astrology and Magic, we realize more vividly the words of Paul: 'for we have to struggle, not with blood and flesh, but

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with the angelic rulers, the angelic authorities, the potentates of the dark present, the spirit forces of evil in the heavenly sphere,' (Moffatt's tr.); also how his triumphant 'I am persuaded that neither the Powers, nor the Ascension of the stars nor their Declinations shall be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord' was a gospel that awakened fervent hallelujahs from many a heart." And this opposition to the mysteries and this joy to be free from them continues to this day. Anyone who realizes that the divine revelation in Jesus is essentially a vital inner faith realized in a life of righteousness, peace and love, will find little use for the mysteries. To him, mysticism will be only the mystery of this good life as of all life.

All along in this book, the effort has been to show that Jesus is the man of human experience: that his personality as the revelation of the Father was realized in our usual and orderly human relations: that his life, and all of his life, may be lived by all of us as best we can (Therefore "Follow thou me.") : that he had no realm beyond and outside of human experience where we may not enter. But the contender for mysticism asserts that Jesus was the great mystic and on his mysticism rests all his life work. His mystical union with the Father, not understandable, immediate and above all human experience, was the source of his wonderful spiritual power. Therefore this chapter is written not only to show the vagueness and absurdity of

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this conception, but also to maintain our original proposition that we may follow Jesus into his most holy of holies. Thus it may be said in advance, a true mysticism may appear as part of human experience and the so-called mysticism as but another phase of miracle.

Life is full of mysteries.—Things that take place or which we do and experience and yet are unable to describe fully or explain. There is the mystery of chemical action and reaction; such as the rush of oxygen and hydrogen to combine into water, or the gravitational pull of one body of matter upon another, or the marvels of electrical energy and heat and light. We give a sort of description of such actions and often learn how to produce them. Then we attempt an explanation, go a little way, and rest in God. The wonder and mystery of it all.

Or we turn our minds to the sky and count the stars and burning suns; mapping out and locating, weighing, estimating and relating; measuring their speed and attractive power; trying to find their order and limits. We stretch our imagination. Our minds grow dizzy with the whole vastness. Systems of suns and constellations and universes beyond our measure and comprehension. Who understands but God? Reverently, we stand wondering and meditating on the vast and profound mysteries of the material world; so near and yet so far away.

There is the mystery of plant life—the power of the

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seed, in every way exactly like the soil in which it is planted, yet so infinitely different from it, that it can take the elements of that soil, transform and differentiate them into living, growing plants of wonderful structure and countless form and color. We discover the order and form of it all; the organic relation and evolution of it all, and catalog all plant life. We take each individual plant and examine it, root, stock, branch, twig, leaf, blossom, seed and cell with microscopic thoroughness. Then we try to explain how it grows and the power of its life; only to give it up and stand reverently wondering before the profound mystery of fertilization and color formation. If we only knew and understood it all in all, we would indeed know what God is. The whole realm is still just about as mysterious to us as to the child gathering its first handful of dandelions or daisies.

Then there is the mystery of animal life. How is this, that two cells, exactly alike in every way that we are able to discover, will yet be so different as to grow and form, one a plant body and the other an animal body? How comes that they both lay hold of the same materials and transform them into such different living matter? How is it that the animal has the power of motion in all its bodily functions? How is it become the seat of mental action? Who explains the basic sympathy and harmony between all animals? Domestication of animals is nothing more than a recognition of this common bond. We trace out the genus and



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species and observe the small variations in all animal evolution, the universal kinship. Indeed our knowledge is quite extensive. But what mystery confronts us as we think of the care of the mother for her young, or the varied work and functions of the organs of the body; most of it going on without our attention. We have a part in them. But they are mysteries deep and profound. We are compelled to stand reverently before them and wait the future divine revelation of it all.

And the spirit of man in the world as also of God in the universe. How is the mental life of men related to their bodies? The physiologist and psychologist have met and exchanged their thoughts; each helping the other to understand the mysterious harmony and relation. But most of it still is a mystery. When it is well described and set in order, the mystery of the relation will remain great as ever. While by itself, the whole science of psychology opens up a new world of investigation whose order we are just beginning to see. Here, too, the philosopher may work. But when all our mental behaviour is cataloged, what does it mean to think?

Again, we stop to understand the control of thought by the moral and spiritual life. The "oughtness" of our mental life. What mysterious power is this that comes into that which is purely intellectual? That which is pure logic and cold reasoning? Whole systems of thought, finely wrought out, are cast aside by

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the assertion of our moral nature, and a control that is absolute is exercised. Here, now arises a peculiar life in moral things. It is a real life or activity true to all the laws of growth. New and truer ethical standards in practical living are continually coming forth.

The enlarging moral life is a wonderful field of investigation. It is not the scientific knowledge we have and are getting or do not have that makes the mystery. It is the vital moral power. What is it? Who is not thrilled as he hears for the first time, "Give me liberty or give me death"? Who is not made strong by the great emancipator's patience, compassion, forgiveness, love? It is a reality we all feel and experience. But is it not an unexplained, profound mystery of personal, moral power going forth for all time to affect men? This will continue a mystery just as much when it is all analysed and described.

Now with all these other mysteries, arises the religious mystery. There comes to be a wonderful inner consciousness of the personal presence of God; of unity and reliance upon God, of communion with God and of blessings from God. It is called mysticism and baffles explanation. Indeed explanation is not attempted. Religious mystics have great power over their fellows to lead them to God. And it is based, so they say, on the immediate and direct relation or communion with God. Therefore is the exhortation that we seek to be

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mystics, to study the great mystics and imitate them that we might experience and use the same power. Jesus is called the great mystic. Many ways of approach to this so-called intuitional experience are admitted, as the way of ceremony or the way of right action. But each comes to the same mystical consciousness of God, his approval and help.—Which is true in some respects. Yet this chapter aims to show that the many ways to the experience are different, the experiences are different and the gods are different. Religion always and everywhere is the consciousness of God. It is fellowship or communion with God. And for the sincere worshipper, it leads to a more or less conscious peacefulness, or unity, or spiritual state or attitude that satisfies or answers the eternal soul questioning or need of God. According to the light they have, by self-sacrifice or torture or self-expression, men come to a religious experience. Some are more easily understood in their experience than others. These difficult ones are called mystics; Oriental, Indian or akin to Indian idealists.—But let us go into this matter farther.

(1) In the horse there is a little of personality and reasoning that answers to or appreciates our human actions toward it. We can express ourselves to the horse so that he will fear or trust us. Who has not approached a horse with slaps and gentle strokes? Or rubbed noses with him and exchanged breath? Or given him some sweet morsel of food? Or talked

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kindly to him? All of which he appreciates and answers with an attitude of obedience and trust. Strangeness and fear give way to a fine measure of common will for cooperative action. Some times this rises to a remarkable state. And so, too, with dogs and all animals to whom we make the proper approach.

The friendship of a dog is quite a remarkable thing. It is a commerce of trust between personalities. We can do very much by way of explanation. But all told it is an unexplained mystical thing. It is a mysticism whose way of attainment, experience and results are very different and of lower degree than our religious mysticism, but a mysticism nevertheless.

(2) A much higher and finer mystery is the natural affection of mother and child and indeed all family ties. We all are held in this mystical bond of physical kinship. We do not originate it. We are born into it. It is the development of millions of years in human evolution. He is unnatural who does not experience it. We worship motherhood. We reverence childhood. We talk of family loyalty, of tribal and community loyalty. We try to understand the herd instinct and group action, mass psychology. We feel the national union and universal human solidarity. The poetry of it all is a halo of glory about us all. Human kinship is a wonderful bond, a mysterious silver thread. Describe it and study it as we will, the natural ties that bind personalities, a living part of persons in their ordered relations, is a profoundly mysterious thing.

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(3) A peculiar mystery of life, not wholly religious, is the mystery of past and future, preexistence and future existence. The mystery of that just beyond our present state of consciousness. Who has not looked on a new-born babe and wondered. The mother and father, the beautiful and holy love of the two and the love of God were all there before it to be sure. But how we wonder. Or we have watched the soul take its flight, and have thought and wondered about our own great venture. Our fathers, in their periods of idealism, dreamed much of such things. Books on heaven seemed to be so necessary, explaining all the inexplicable. And while we are more willing to trust and more sensible not to attempt explanation, the living mystery of the next world continues.

(4) The mystery of the hocus-pocus. The mystifier who pulls rabbits out of hats and makes tables walk and calls spirits back to earth. Such wonderful mysteries for the boys and girls. Pass him up. No. Do not pass him up. There is such a lot of him. We must consider him. Just one, the mystifier of politics. He always has a whole bag of tricks and some times he pulls everything out of the bag before he wins his point. The essential mystery of it all is the dominance of other wills by the selfish over-assertion of his own. He obtrudes himself upon us for his own interests. And would you believe it, we do him the service. That's the mystery, the corrupted mystery of what

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should be the rightful relation of cooperative wills. Of this true mystery I will speak in the proper place. But this rule of one person over another in authoritative control is a very different matter. It is always the control of the inferiority complex. And it necessarily must be selfish, or it could not exist. It works for confusion not order, weakness not strength. After we have gone through the experience we are very much less able to do our proper work in the great social cooperation.

They used to take the slogan "The War Lord" or "The Divine Right of Kings." But that is not the term now most often used. "Captain of Industry" or "Financial Wizard" or "The Assyrian Master" or "The Ecclesiastical Dignitary." What a contrast between the volitional complex of H. G. Wells and that of "The Prince." One is a healthy, unselfish, helpful, social, brotherly thing: the other is a narrow, selfish, individualistic, unsocial, unhealthy, cruel thing. Wherever "The Prince" goes, especially in England's domain, people give him their wills. And they are the worse for it all. I cannot understand it. Nobody understands it. But it is so. And that is the mystery of formal authority. However, H. G. Wells also goes over the whole world. Our wills come in contact with his will. There is no servitude. Our wills are stronger for the experience. We are larger and truer. He has not sought to corrupt a human order of cooperation.



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Sympathy and love arise and human solidarity. A real mystery of society. How wicked that a man should substitute another and corrupted volitional complex. How sinful that we all become dupes and join in to create and maintain the complex. Here is Mysticism in a sad fact of human experience, baffling explanation.

Yet there are literally millions of folks, in spite of this sad social experience, repeated hundreds of times, who are ambitious to seize the scepter. And many, many more millions willing that they should do so: all teaching and exalting the complex created. Mystery of mysteries. When will it end? Only yesterday's paper stated that the Right Reverend Bishop of —— diocese was received in audience by the Pope. The blessing he there received he would return to bestow on the faithful of the diocese. Is not that a mystery, how he can carry a blessing clear across the ocean? I know folks who cannot carry it down the aisle of a church. And in some ways though possibly not so marked in measure, the same hocus-pocus proceedings maintain in Protestant ecclesiasticism. Mystery on mystery, who will help us?

(5) Now the mystery of religious practices of a purely ceremonial character. The idols and sacred relics of the ages; the seven candlesticks, the seven seals, the seven angels, the beast and the Lamb; the holy sacrament as celebrated in Christian churches; the many oblations, sacrifices, fastings, self-tortures,

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shrines, fetishes and taboos of the non-Christian religions today; and the religious forms of all ages that are aside from and do not aim at helpful, healthful social living, but only aim at individual peace, harmony and unity with God—there is a great multitude of such selfish ceremonial practices—the human spirit seeking immediate approach to the divine spirit in some mystical way and regardless of ethical and moral values—who dare think lightly of all this? It is all serious business. It is indeed mysticism par excellence. No one dare deny the reality, in the worshiper, of the communion with God thereby and the mystical inner consciousness of him.

Just one illustration of all this. Here is a news item from Calcutta, May 7, 1925: "A worshiper of the Northern India sects shows his devotion in this way. Recently he passed through Kalimpong on his way to the sacred city of Gya. His journey was of unusual interest.

"His mode of traveling was remarkable, for he was covering the distance from the Central Plains of India to Tibet by measuring his own length on the ground.

"He had protectors on his hands and knees, and his method was to raise his hands, let himself fall full length on the road with hands outstretched, pull himself up to the point his finger-tips had reached, rise upright again and so repeat the performance.

"When night fell he drew a mark on the road, went

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to the nearest habitation for food and rest and resumed his journey in the morning."

Suppose now we attempt an explanation of this fanatical ceremony, psychologically and every way. I leave all that to the psychologist. When done, we must all bow our heads with reverence at the inner spirit of the man. Here is a genuine worshiper with a real personal devotion to God that is so impossible of explanation that all we can do is to call it religious mysticism. The world is so full of this kind of mysticism or immediate communion with God. And God is so weary with it all.

(6) But go to. Now I show you a mystery that is truly a Christian mystery, a religious mysticism that is worth while.—But bear in mind I do not want you to seek for it. It was not intended to be sought after. He who seeks for it shall not find it. He who finds it shall lose it.

God has always sought to reveal himself in human living. As we look back over the records of the past we discover many persons who have caught the divine motive and have made possible that revelation. Guatama, Socrates, Moses, Isaiah and especially Jesus and his true followers. As God is weary of "New Moons," so these have turned from such to life. Righteousness has been their passion. Just and loving human relations and social orders. They have had the same deep longing for the immediate divine communion that the

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ceremonial devotee seeks for and professes. But they are greatly provoked at his empty, sordid, harmful practices, much vexed at the kind of mystical communion resulting and sadly disappointed with the sort of divine personality discovered and worshiped. To their great joy, they have, by living, stumbled upon the fact that God is approached in the same way that we use in communicating with our fellow men. This is the true short cut to God. The approach to a personality is through its activity.

They reverse the process in so-called mysticism. For in that the worshiper seeks divine power first as a basis of his acts. He tries to get life by a short cut and is essentially a sham. He tries in a secret, selfish way to load up with power for life. Not so, these men. They act and live and in that comes the divine power. There, too, comes the consciousness of fellowship, person with person, the truly mystical thing. Always, God, desiring to bless his children, simply lives in their living. And his prophets simply get into that divine activity of living, both to catch the revelation and to give it to men. Living in essence is unselfish. One loses self-thought, self-motive, self-communion, self-joy. All one's personality is turned outward to make right connections with other personalities. Therefore we do indeed travel a different road, have a different experience of mystical fellowship and find a different God. The only thing common is the longing of person for person. This longing, if selfish, is

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full of fear, if unselfish, it is full of trust. And this trust, this belief of person in person, is the true mysticism.

Of course, now, all I am doing is calling attention to the way and the truth and the life of Jesus. He was master of the art of living. He was also master of the art of fellowship with the Father. His communion was the deepest, most profound and mysterious of any man. And his God was the highest and truest God. Which came first, his communion with the Father or his activity among men? Neither one. They came together. As well ask which pole of the magnet, the positive or negative, comes first. One does not exist without the other. And they both are strong as each is strong. Jesus we discover living a good life, better than we ever thought could be lived in this sinful world. We also see him at the same time in most exalted fellowship with the Father and with power among men. All this living goes on today as ever. And that is the mystery *par excellence*. Who can explain it, especially its rising into the Nth power?

So if one desires to be a true mystic, to have the coveted immediate approach to God, it is for him. It will be found in the love and trust that arises in the true moral living such as Jesus set for us in his rich moral life. As all true prophets of God and best of all, he took all our mysterious religious sentiments and thoughts into the realm of our moral life, our social relations, our personal contacts. And they are there

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to stay. The religious experiences of love and trust that arise as we follow him in our daily living are openly and truly a mystery beyond explanation. And they will soon be the only religious mystery worth while. Who wants very much the mysterious religious experience of the man referred to above? Who wants to measure himself along the road to some distant sacred spot? Who wants the God he finds? Who wants the ever hungry and unsatisfied immediate fellowship he professes? But to live righteously, to do justice and to love mercy; to have love, trust, peace and brotherly relations; to come finally thus to a God of love and trust, and personal care and fellowship, who knows all and does all and loves all—give me that mystery of mysteries.

Yesterday, two little neighbors four years old went to the cherry tree and ate cherries. Having had all the law allows but not all they wanted, true to the economic laws of their elders, they decided to accumulate a little wealth that they might buy candy and gum. So each deposited a handful of cherries in his hat, and then together they sallied forth on the street.

"Cherries for sale. Nice ripe cherries. Fresh cherries, just picked. Five cents for cherries!" came across the lawn to my ears. And I was unwilling to beat the dust out of a big rug.

Then up the walk came the little men of big business; big cooperative business; big common ownership, common management, common operation, common profits,



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common human interests, joy, life, trust. Placing themselves squarely before me on the walk, they said: "Want to buy some cherries, Mister?"

"Want to buy some cherries?" I repeated, true also to the economic custom of playing for time.

"Yes sir. Want to buy them?" they continued.

"Yes." I answered slowly. "I want to buy them alright. But I fear I do not have enough money. How much?"

"Only a nickel, is all you need," one said encouragingly.

"A nickel?" I repeated, again hedging for time and seeing a chance to drive a bargain. "All you have in both hats for a nickel?"

They looked at each other a moment and nodded their heads.—They got them cheaply, you see. They did not grow the tree or plant it. They simply discovered the cherries hanging on the tree and secured the proper concessions and operating rights. The cherries were no use to anyone hanging on the tree. They were simply "raw, very raw material" that the backward fathers and mothers did not appreciate or care to use. So they got the concessions for little or nothing, just a promise to eat all they wanted and not waste any or get sick.—They got them cheap I repeat. They simply took them, you see,—as usual when it comes to "raw materials."

"Yes, all of them for a nickel," they urged, thinking all at once of gum and candy.

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"It's a bargain," said I. "Here's your nickel." And they poured the cherries into my hands.

"Is it a really truly nickel?" queried the brightest one who took it—the brightest and controlling spirit always holds the profits.

"Yes. That is good United States money," I answered plainly and pointedly and with not a little feeling. "It has the United States stamp on it."

The flag follows its citizens wherever they go, whether on missions of mercy or economic advantage and gain.

"Al right then," they repeated in unison. "You really want the cherries and are satisfied to give a nickel for them?"

"Want them? Satisfied?" I said, staring them out of countenance. "Of course I am. Are you satisfied?"

"Yes. We are satisfied alright." Such business integrity, such conscientious honesty amazed me.—And they wheeled about at once and started for the store, walking close together and examining the nickel. What they were really doing was holding a meeting of all the owners and operators and making plans for future deals.

Meanwhile I sat down on the walk and ate my cherries, every one of them. There was not a **wormy** one among them. Of course there would not be when one deals with such honesty. And then something wonderful and mysterious happened to me. I cannot explain it. But all at once strength came to me. It

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was like the strength of ten giants. My arms began to go up and down with great force, both of them. My eyes turned instinctively toward the rug. And I just beat the life—dust out of it without thinking about it. It was a real joy. There was a song in my heart.—Strange mystery.—The home with its beautiful helpfulness of all its members gripped me as never before. The cooperation and interdependence of all business organizations of all the world. All business including rug-beating. Human solidarity and world brotherhood was a fact beyond question. All barriers were burned away. For one boy was a Methodist and the other a Congregationalist—and trust and love seemed everywhere. And just as I was finishing my job—

“Want a bite of candy?” I dropped my beautiful carpet beater and looked around into the smiling countenance of two happy boys. A share in the profits, you see. A sort of bonus maybe. Can’t get away from the bonuses, to everyone, including the preacher.

“Yes. Certainly. Thanks.” As I took the candy. “How much did you buy?”

“Two pieces of gum and this sack full of candy. Two cents for the gum. Three cents for the candy. He put a lot in the sack. We ate it all but the last piece. Saved that for you.”

“Saved that for you,” went over and over in my mind as they sat down and visited with me; telling me all their best secrets and trusting me as much as their

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mother. Such trust and love. Now they come running into our house as their own.—And now I am able to finish my essay on mysticism. I have gone to the bottom of the matter. Every question is answered. All the world holds together in love and trust. That is moral life and I make it my religion as Jesus did, and as all folks will do some day. That is my mysticism. Get into it. It costs you nothing but life. Do not spoil it by asking for explanation. It cannot be explained. Jesus did not and could not explain it.

## CHAPTER XII.

### God Beyond Us and God With Us

#### (a) BIBLICAL CONCEPTION OF GOD IN MEN

**T**HE eleventh chapter of Hosea, beginning, "When Israel was a child I loved him and taught him to walk," is a wonderful picture of Jehovah loving and caring for a nation as a father cares for his child. Isaiah 63:16 says, "thou, O Jehovah, art our Father." In Deuteronomy 32:6 occurs, "Is not Jehovah thy father that hath bought thee? He hath made thee and established thee." In these references and many others that might be quoted from the Old Testament, is plainly seen the conception of Jehovah as Father. The same thing is true with regard to the religious literature outside the Hebrews. In all, there is a certain richness of love in the conception that measures up well to that revealed in Jesus Christ. The remarkable difference is in the local as against the universal application of it. While the prophets before Jesus enlarged the conception of Jehovah to be the God of all the earth, we find little or nothing in it that God is gracious and loving toward all nations and peoples. In that conception, Jesus is supremely original and comprehensive.

In the Old Testament we find Jehovah coming to

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men directly, walking and talking with them, as in Genesis 3:8. But there is also to be found all along the "Spirit of Jehovah," the "Spirit of God" as when the Spirit of Jehovah came to Saul and turned him another heart. The Spirit of God is the vital energy of God, brooding over the cosmos, creating, giving life and sustaining it. Men with exceptional powers are such because they are filled with the Spirit of God. This is the prophetic gift. It was to come upon the suffering Servant of Jehovah, anointing him to preach good tidings. It brings to all moral and spiritual purity. Such was the conception of the "Spirit" in the Old Testament. In it all, we hardly find the idea of this Spirit as a separate person in the Godhead.

But one is surprised to see how often the term "Angels" or "Angel" of Jehovah is used all through the Bible, and especially in the period of Judaism. Angels are messengers of God in various forms. Sometimes they identify themselves with God, but not as a part of the Godhead. A great company surrounds the throne. At first they are morally neutral, but later on there arise rank and title and moral distinctions. In the New Testament there is little change in this conception. In one way or another, angels are simply means of communication between God and men. In a certain true sense, and parallel with the "Spirit of Jehovah" of the Old Testament, this conception of angels is a step toward the conception of the personal Holy Spirit. In the period between the two books, God became very



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remote in thought. And so mediators were very necessary. "Angels," "Word," "Son," "Messiah," "Spirit of God" are used to set forth this mediation. All which goes to show the first efforts of the Hebrews to conceive God beyond us and yet God with us.

In the opening of the New Testament, the Holy Ghost appears and prepares the way for Jesus. Matthew 3:11; and Mark 1:8; John 1:33; Luke 3:16; all state that "he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit." Luke 1:15 says, John "is filled with the Holy Spirit." In connection with the Most High, Jesus is conceived of the Holy Ghost. Jesus is one with the Holy Ghost as he is one with the Father. The sign of Jesus' coming was the descent of the Holy Ghost. Jesus even imparts the Spirit to his disciples later on. In Mark 1:12, the Spirit drives Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. In the first public utterance of Jesus he goes back to the Old Testament and applies its words to himself, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me—."

Then, following this initial stage, in all the writings of the New Testament, are many statements and passages where the Holy Spirit, God the Father, and Jesus His Son are treated as distinct persons, yet all bound up as One. In the teachings of Jesus, he declares we must be born of the Spirit; we shall receive the Spirit as the Comforter guiding us into all truth. He also, as in Matthew 11:27, declares himself the Son of God, that he and the Father are One, and, (John 14:21-23),

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that he and the Father will come to us who keep his commandments, and abide with us. He prays to the Father as a person distinct from himself. Mark, 1:11 and 9:7 state the words of the Father concerning Jesus, "Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased." John 3:16; "God so loved us that he gave his only begotten Son." In John 1:18 Jesus declares the Father to men. In the Acts and the Epistles there are one hundred and sixty statements made concerning the Holy Spirit. The benedictions which we use today are but the repetition of the benedictions of the New Testament, "The love of God, the grace of our Lord Jesus and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all." We are born of the Spirit, baptized of the Spirit, victorious over the devil by the Spirit, and we are in the power of the Spirit. In Matthew 12:22-32, the sin against the Holy Spirit is unforgivable. And when it comes to God the loving heavenly Father, the best of all the parables of Jesus, the prodigal son, declares it beyond all comparison.

### (b) THE PROBLEM AND TEACHINGS THEREON

Now it is this multitude of specific assertions and this underlying philosophy that confront us when we take up the question of the Trinity.\* Filled with that philosophy and possessing these records as a basis, in the first world Christian Conference at Nicea, the church fathers, led by Athanacius, set forth the doctrinal

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\*For a good detailed putting of the doctrine of the Trinity see H. M. Scott, *Hasting's Bible Dictionary*. Extra vol. p. 308.

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statement that has continued to this day. There is the Biblical record, seemingly beyond all question demanding such a doctrine. And there is the record of the Christian leaders in the church since, the great souls who have moved men mightily for God, but who have conveniently closed their eyes to the use of these three Personalities by all religions, holding firm to the doctrine of the Trinity, God Three in One. And parallel with them are the souls who denied it, with little vital grip on humanity.

The Unitarians of America can boast of but little gains under the finest opportunity. It seems that once for all the matter has been settled. Here is the great foundation stone of evangelical Christianity. Let no one touch it. Who would even dare to declare that he would not accept the arguments of either Unitarians or Trinitarians? Who would?—Whether anyone dare or not, one thing evident to the thoughtful person today is that this fundamental problem must be rethought and restated. The facts as recorded must be weighed again and reestablished, and then compared with the experience of Christian men today. The challenge is made by devout men as true to Jesus as any who have declared the Trinitarian doctrine. The discussions and arguments are on, not in the old alignment of Trinitarian and Unitarian, but in an entirely new form. We must go through and come forth.

And the first thing in the defence of such a procedure is the lack of vital power with men today in the old ar-

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guments. Philosophers today do not marshall forth the old arguments. Any minister who should do so would find his audience of Christian people going to sleep. This seems a terrible, cruel, hard saying. But it is the fact and of great significance. The interest is gone. For there has come (1) a change in philosophy, (2) a better reading of the records, all records, and (3) a clearer understanding of human experience and the revelation of God in that experience.

### (c) THE SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM

First experience. And this seems so simple. Who, in his inner consciousness of God can make a clear distinction between the impact of God as Father and God as Son and God as Holy Spirit? Who can separate and point out his religious experiences and catalog them and say, "The personal Holy Spirit came to me and produced this in my consciousness, the personal Father is responsible for this and the personal Son distinctly brought me on the way in this particular?"

Such a thing absolutely cannot be done. If those persons are such distinct personalities as to make us able to declare them such, we surely must be conscious of them as one person is conscious of another person. This is the first fact of personality without which all experience goes to pieces, and personal relations completely disappear. But we are unable to make those distinctions in our consciousness of God. And this is the great halting point at the very entrance to the Trinitarian highway. Halted there, one is forced to

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declare the evangelical power of Trinitarians is not founded in this doctrine. We must look elsewhere. The warmth of love, the zeal for service and the joy of salvation have deeper roots than that. Other things have furnished the power, not only for true living but also to carry along this excess-baggage of misconceptions. The failure, after all, of Unitarians has been that they mistook a secondary matter for a cardinal doctrine and used up all their arguments and doctrines in condemning it.

What we are aware of is a wonderful spirit of love and truth and service in the persons about us that inspires us, and of a spirit in society transforming it into just relations. Of this, we testify as coming from them. Of this, our friends testify as coming from their friends. Of this, the disciples testify as coming from Jesus. We are aware of a written record of Jesus, handed down, more or less reliable, and not so inspiring as his Spirit in men through all the centuries since he was born. Indeed that record is of little value without that living personality.

We are conscious of Jesus as we are of Socrates or Isaiah, only with a greater fullness, a real person on earth. We are conscious of a vital saving fellowship with him in written words, in human history and in our own lives. We are aware of other living beings about us who lack that love and truth of the people called Christian. They have personal relations to us in many ways. We are aware of the material world. Its mes-

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sage strikes upon our consciousness and we master it and give an interpretation to it all which requires a personality in it. We are aware of a sum total of all these things in our inner consciousness.

As we experience these things, we are aware of the multitude of them, their vastness and their infinite minuteness and detail, and we are lost in worship of Whoever is the ground of it all. Thus we are aware of a consciousness disturbed and vitalized by a spiritual being from without and distinct from the material world, of a loving care that seems personal. We are aware of a peace of mind and heart in the contemplation of such a Person. We are aware of the essential unity and harmony of all things of experience when thus resting in such. Such a One comes to our consciousness so easily and naturally. We would not offend Him. We are aware of confusion and turmoil within, of guilt and fear when we cut off our thought, withdraw the flight of our spirits, act without Him and attempt to stand alone. We are conscious of the havoc we bring to humanity by so doing and the hopelessness and despair in the breasts of those who do so. We are conscious of the gulf between them and us who trust and love this Person and we fold ourselves in his arms in perfect peace. We find the fullness of our consciousness in Him. That is our real experience.

Any other language confuses us. And if the philosopher desires to explain it all, there is only one logical assertion. Personal awareness of exterior reality can



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be created only by personality. Like produces like. Therefore God the Person is. If the answer is already in our consciousness, then Spirit answers to Spirit. It is all God coming to us. And if one part of our awareness or experience of the world beyond our own personality is precious to us, so precious that we call it divine, is there not divinity in all of it? Then we would not have half enough personalities or terminologies or phrases or titles for the full expression of that revealed divinity. One part demands personality for its explanation as much as another. Are we not led at once to the larger conception and bold faith that God can come into every soul and into everything we experience? Did not the revelation in Jesus establish this fact beyond all question that God comes into all human life? What else was the purpose of his life? Where is the divinity in Jesus different from the divinity in us so that we must declare another divine person in the Godhead? Or the consciousness of God direct to our souls, why make that a distinct personality at once separate and also a part of God? Experience does not call for it.

All this manifold conscious experience is God revealed to the human soul. Any discussion of this is understandable. We are all at home here. God coming to my soul directly; coming to me through his coming to other souls directly and in great fullness to Jesus; coming to me in the physical universe. These are all in my conscious life. And the postulate is either many

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gods or one God. That God has an infinite variety of activity is in harmony with the experience of personality. That He has a triple personality is nowhere demanded, but is at great variance with our experience. Each person about us can do many things. Cannot God do more? indeed all acts and thoughts and sentiments? We need not a distinct personality for each one of his varied activities.

Whence then cometh this ancient doctrine? What is its ground, and why does it persist? It comes from the miracle, and especially the miracle in the mystery religions. First there are miracles recorded in the Bible and especially in connection with Jesus. To tell of these and record truly the words and deeds of Jesus requires a miraculous inspiration in the writer. Fundamentally revelation from God to men is said to be a miraculous thing.

Resting on these miraculous things as a presupposition, the reader of the miraculously inspired writing in a most reasonable way builds up the doctrine. He who has the best intellect conceives it the best and most clearly. And then as a final step, he who gets a good understanding of the doctrine, by careful study, gives intellectual assent to it (which is wrongly called belief) and is saved. This last mysterious experience rests on the theory that the mind, rather than the emotions and the will in moral activity, leads in religion as in all life. We follow our ideals and are saved. All along from first to last, can be seen the miracle. We

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even fall down and worship the man reasoning out the doctrine as well as reason itself. So long as this attitude persists the doctrine stands. And it ought to stand or multitudes will be out to sea with no anchor for their souls. We must first change the attitude.

It was often stated that we followed our ideals during the war. And we did. That is why the World War stands the supreme folly for all time. We left the world of reality and real persons, real human beings in brotherly relations and divine fellowship, gave ourselves to intellectual ideals and committed the wholesale slaughter. When we recognized each other as real persons we repented what we had done. When we do this in religion we will repent of our eternal idealizing as the center of life, and place the emotions and will on high. The great stream of life is made up mostly of a moral and spiritual activity in which the mind becomes the critic, a part of it all to be sure, as much so as the banks of a stream are a part of the stream, but not the chief part. That done, doctrines and ideals will take second place. Personal loves and hates and personal relations will be the heart and soul of religion and the mind will be busy to set these in their true order. Vast quantities of philosophical reasoning will be shipped overboard.

Then we will have the courage to face the other intellectual thing that makes possible and maintains this doctrine, viz., that we must base our thought and our very life and salvation on the Bible itself. For

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it states, "Believe God. Believe me." Belief is from soul to soul, from man to God. We cannot believe a book. We can only understand a book. Man lives by faith. Religion is faith in men and faith in God. It is the most living thing in all the world. And we are not to corrupt it by making it a faith in the record of the faith of a past age. What sort of reason is it to reason out a fundamental doctrine on such a premise. Yet that is what is done. Great thinkers read and study the Bible and then lay down this principle and teach it till it has become second nature to the Christian world.

All doctrines must come from the Bible. Living human experience is utterly disregarded. Also is disregarded the fact that the writers of the Bible got the record they left us as best they could from their living experience. Shall we not do the same? If our minds are to be free to do their thinking we must clear away this false premise. The inspiration of the men who wrote the Bible is not miraculous or different from that of men today. They do not claim it themselves. We ought not to claim it for them or build upon it as a fact. With this assumption gone, the scales fall from our eyes and we can go to the Bible and read the statements with which we are concerned just now and get the sense.

It now appears why the whole vast argument of Unitarians and Trinitarians both should be passed by and a new course blazed out. It is all built upon

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the miraculous. Vacate the miraculous and the discussion is vacated. Let divine revelation be natural between God and his children made in his image and to fellowship with him. Let the life of Jesus be a natural human life as all our lives, which it is. Let men write at that time in the perfectly natural way that men write now. Let faith be the trust and life between persons human and divine, a natural thing and not an intellectual judgment. It is the assumption of the unnatural element that makes possible and necessary the mass of reasoning on the Trinity.

Trinitarianism is an intellectual declaration of a three-fold divine personality in the revelation of God to men. Unitarianism is an intellectual protest as to the logic of that declaration. Naturally, both, being intellectual, would have little power for the religious life. The protest disappears with the declaration when there comes forth the clear testimony of our consciousness of God, of our fellowship with Him as revealed to us in his manifold ways. This old discussion is the last heresy in human explanations of divine revelation. In the beginning, every stone, tree, cloud, star, thunder, has had a divine spirit or person in it. The revelation of God in nature which we get now in our experience with it, as much and even more than the ancients, they declared to be a divine personality. So, too, they declared the revelations of God to the human soul directly were Angels or Spirits with distinct personalities coming to them; not only to each individual but a

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different personality for all the different experiences of the individual.

Events of history and our "special providences" were also explained thus. Indeed, "Trinities" in all religions are actually the last stand of pantheism. All this personifying, in one form or another, through all ages, is the very essence of pantheism. And the cure for pantheism has always been a clearer and truer conception of the revelation of God to and in the world. The ancient stood with reverence before the stone conceiving God in it in some miraculous way. I stand with more reverence and worship of God as I consider the stone on my desk with its regular and mathematical proportions. I find a wonderful revelation of God therein. That revelation I am clearly conscious of and do not need to declare it to be a Personality of the Godhead. So it is with the flower and the new born child or the ever enlarging establishment of justice among men. All are the revelation of God to me. The form of expression or thought concept in the explanation of it is a separate and distinct thing from that revelation and changes with the changes of life. As that life is today, the Trinitarian concept in the explanation breaks down and does not explain.

So when we read the record, referred to briefly at the opening of this chapter, let us aim to find out what was the experience that became the basis of what was written and compare it with our own consciousness of God rather than to accept the record in an authorita-



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tive fashion and mouth that record or build conclusions thereon. This will be the true attitude. May be we will find here as in the other religions a reality of divine revelation that will warm our hearts.

I shall dismiss the large problem of the relation of the mystery religions and Greek philosophy to Christianity by simply stating it. We all know that the early church fathers as well as the Apostle Paul were students of that philosophy and fashioned their religious conceptions in it. We know, too, that the Hebrews did not write or think much in philosophical ways. They lived their religion and recorded their life. They say much about the Spirit of God in actual contact with men. But as to a philosophy as to the nature of that Spirit separate from men and how he comes to men, they say not a word. India and Greece spent all their time doing that. To them, the great thing was to find a reasonable conception and explanation of God's coming to men. Their work is seen in the mystery religions so strong at that time. And the issue of all their effort was that there must be some kind of mediation.

Beings of various sorts, as angels and Spirits, partly human and partly divine, usually more divine than human, were always the outcome. This is in all their religions as it is in early Christianity. This has been well set forth. We have no occasion to repeat that work here. It was the basis and warp and woof of the doctrine of the Trinity. It has passed away and a

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philosophy and psychology truer to human life and the divine activity therein has taken its place. That alone is sufficient cause for rethinking the doctrine of divine revelation to men. Our philosophy today cuts out all mediators. There is God. There are men and women. The contact is immediate and personal. When God has a revelation for human beings, He is at once here in human life, nearer than hands and feet.

It pays big dividends and helps much to understand the influence and relation of Greek philosophy and the mystery religions to Christian philosophy and theology if one will read the book entitled *The Mystery Religions and Christianity* by S. Angus, Scribner's New York.

In that book under the head of *Communion and Identification With God* (p. 104), Plutarch is quoted: "Inspiration is an affective condition of the soul produced by some divine power." Deification, Divinizing and Demortalizing was common to pagan cults as to Christianity. Clement of Alexandria (p. 106), uses language common to both. "That man with whom the Logos dwells . . . is made like God and is beautiful . . . that man becomes God, for God so wills it; the Logos of God became man that from man you might learn how man may become God." Here the word God means largely what we do in using the word Divine. (P. 108), "In fact through the course of Greek religious thought a single thread may be traced, in the essential unity of man and God." Seneca says,

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"A good man differs only in point of time from God, whose disciple and imitator he is." Epictetus says, "Do you suppose that God would suffer his own son to be enslaved?"

We are all familiar with Socrates following the leadership of his *Daemon*. Out of the East came also the God-Man conception. The Divinizing of human life is not new to Christianity. So too the immortalizing. (p. 110) A prayer in the Hermetic religion says, "Enter thou into my spirit and my thoughts my whole life long, for thou art I and I am thou; thy name I guard as a charm in my heart." (p. 111), "A third phase, the divine indwelling, expressed a religious experience which formed a ground common to the Mysteries and Platonic and Stoic philosophy and to Christianity. The experience and modes of expression admitted of great varieties. The devotee in the Liturgy of Mithra prays: 'abide with me in my soul: leave me not,' and 'that I may be initiated and that the Holy Spirit may breathe within me.' A magical prayer in the British Museum runs, 'Come to me Lord Hermes, as babes to women's wombs'; a phrase of mysticism which recalls many of the seemingly exaggerated cravings of some of the Christian mystics, (As Madame Guyon in a trance or ecstasy, became married to Christ)."

"This condition of divine indwelling is the counterpart to that of enthusiasm whereby the mystic is in a real sense 'in God' by substitution or interpenetration of personality. The Mysteries were thus familiar with

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that mutual indwelling of human and divine so conspicuous in the mystical aspects of Paulinism, and still more in the thought of the Fourth Gospel, and in the highest reaches of Christian experience. To Paul 'in Christ,' 'in the Spirit' and 'Christ in you' were synonymous expressions of a psychological reality. The language of the Fourth Gospel, 'I in you and you in Me' conveyed a familiar meaning to a world saturated in mystic thought. A London papyrus has preserved a magical (Hermetic) prayer: 'for thou art I, and I am thou; thy name is mine, for I am thy image (eidolon).' If the language of the ancient initiates seems to us very impalpable, elusive and exaggerated, so also is the language in which those who have seen the Vision Beatific have endeavored to label religious experiences, the reality and power of which cannot be doubted."

"Philosophy came to the aid of the Mysteries in asserting, (Seneca) 'God is nigh thee, is with thee, is within thee . . . A holy spirit dwells within us, a scrutinizer and guardian of our good and evil.' Epictetus teaches, 'You are bearing a God with you though you know it not. Do you think I mean some external god of silver or gold? It is within yourself you carry him, and you do not perceive that it is he whom you profane by impure thoughts and unworthy actions. If even an image of God were present you would not dare to act as you do, but when God himself is with you, hearing and seeing all, are you not ashamed of such conduct and thoughts, ignorant of your own nature?' "

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The same connection between the mystery religions and Christianity is to be noted in all the great religious experiences. Every possible human experience was used to represent the divine human relations or communion. The holy marriage, or copulation with deity was the literal act of synousia with deity through his priests or phallos or otherwise. Plutarch says the Egyptians believed "it is not impossible for the Spirit of God to have intercourse with a woman." So it was in the thought of sympathy or fellowship with God in suffering, fellowship in resurrection, the sacramental meals of eating God, the contemplation or adoration of God, immortality with God.

Now, therefore, is all made clear. The Bible record, in the light of these things, becomes "their way of putting the revelation." The events and experiences of divine revelation are similar to our own experiences. Search out and explain our own and we explain theirs. The whole matter clears up and we truly understand their writings. That done, we may find the Bible is not destroyed as a record of religious experience. It is simply *their* record. Their living experience, not their record of it, will demand and necessitate the doctrine we must formulate. Had the theologians grounded their doctrine thus it would stand today.

### (d) ILLUSTRATIONS IN COMPARISON OF PAST AND PRESENT EXPERIENCE

Let us look at the experience recorded in Acts 8:14-17; "Now when the apostles that were at Jerusalem

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heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John, who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit: for as yet it was fallen on none of them: only they had been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit." Let us first note here and lay aside the philosophy referred to above. Some in Samaria have been won to the Christian way of living. The apostles of Jerusalem are interested. "Can it be the Samaritans who deal not at all with us are being saved? Let us examine them and see that all is well. We want no fanaticism or ignorance. They must be carefully instructed so that their faith will be reasonable. We want harmony of thought as well as good-will. They must know all the teachings of Jesus. Indeed, there may be a question whether or not they are truly conscious of their experience of salvation. Have they the Spirit? Do they know whence their experience came and how?"—Same situation we have had through all the years and have today. The apostles went to the Samaritans to examine and instruct and explain. They took with them their philosophical preconceptions which we know they had from the study of the religions of their times. In that light they made their examinations and dealt with the touch of the divine on the Samaritans. What do we do in determining whether or not converts to Jesus' way of living are genuine?



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We say to people who are living as though Jesus never lived: "Find out his acts, teachings and his attitude to men and God. Fellowship with Jesus and his disciples in this way, throw yourself over on the things ascertained and live accordingly. In your soul will arise a new consciousness of God, a new setting up of life, a new peace and harmony with all things. That is what will come to you."—I verily believe we confuse the beginner of the "Jesus' way of life," to tell him in the ancient and worn out philosophical formula, that the Holy Spirit as a distinct divine personality will come to his inner consciousness. In the apostles laying on their hands, can be seen the often repeated ceremony of the mystery religions, nothing more.

Again. Take the apprehension of the apostle Paul on the road to Damascus. He often refers to the experience and the effect of it on his life. His own words declare it was not a change of his good purpose, but a change of his attitude and relation to Jesus of Nazareth. That person came to him on the road of duty zealously, conscientiously and religiously being done. He saw him. As a result he changed his whole course of action to conform to Jesus' way of living. This brought him into all kinds of ecclesiastical confusion. It drove him through perils to the whole world with the good news of his experience. He sets it forth in his own philosophical conceptions and those reporting it in the same current thought. But through it all we can see that Paul had been thinking about Jesus and acting

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accordingly. Which course of action brought him to the place where he discovered such thought and action were terribly wrong. The reality of the man Jesus is accepted and tremendous moral and religious changes take place in him. That is the fact of experience which we observe, little if any different from that of Luther or Wesley or thousands of men since.

In the description of that experience which we find in the language and thought of Luke and Paul, we can see much that would demand that Jesus be a divine person, not human but separate from God and at the same time one with Him. But when we state our own experience and note the theology of the mystery religions of Paul's time, those demands vanish and Paul's and our experience become one; free from the miraculous and explainable in our own thought forms.

This same thing can be observed in dealing with the experiences of the disciples after the crucifixion and death of Jesus. Is the basis of their consciousness of the fact that Jesus is alive and comes to them any different from the basis of our consciousness of the same thing? Was it produced by a physical resurrection? If so, was it also maintained in a miraculous way after his ascension? Soon or late they must come to our experience of the reality of Jesus. Could that drive them as it does us in evangelistic zeal to tell all men about Jesus and his way of life? I feel sure it could and did. For when we properly weigh the relation of resurrections in all the religions of that age

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we will come to see the identity of experience. We will not need a miraculous Holy Spirit to come to them on a particular day and personally take the place of the person Jesus who has withdrawn for the time being, having done his work, to return later to take it up again.

We do not need to be in any dispensation or age of the Holy Spirit to explain matters. We find them, as ourselves, conscious of peace and fellowship with God in the reality of the man Jesus. This we tell to others as did his disciples; conceiving his divinity in a more natural way and entirely in harmony with the divinity in us. And why not? Since our divinity comes from shaping our lives like his life, would it not be like his divinity? Can we understand him any other way? Can we experience his experience any other way?

## CHAPTER XIII.

### The Parables — The Supreme Teaching of Jesus

THE parables recorded in Matthew are found, chap. 7:24-27; chap. 13; seven parables of the kingdom, chap. 18:12-14; 21-35; chap. 20:1-16; chap. 21:33; chap. 22:14; chap. 24:32-34; 45-51; chap. 25. This is an abundance of material and it wonderfully sets forth the teachings of Jesus. Yet in it all we fail to find the greatest of all the parables: Luke, chap. 10, The Good Samaritan; and chap. 15, The Prodigal Son; John, chap. 10, The Good Shepherd; chap. 15, The Vine and The Branches and chaps. 4 and 6, the discourses on the Bread of Life and the Living Water.

These all should be held in mind when considering the parables. And there should not be omitted, "birds of the heavens" and "consider the lilies" in Matthew the sixth chapter. Also many other short sayings or metaphors of the same nature found all through his conversations must come in here for consideration. In fact the parable is simply an extended metaphor. Therefore all figurative language, any picture drawn from the natural world and made use of to set forth the truth of the spirit world is properly before us in

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this chapter. How readest thou the parables of Jesus?\*

The first thing to be observed here is the riches and wealth of these things. Here is where we find the real teachings of Jesus, living, true, convincing and fruitful. When once we fill our minds with them we seem to feel that we have it all. Of a truth they say, "Without a parable spake he not unto them," and "No man spake like this man." All the rest is of little worth in the presence of the wonderful metaphors of Jesus. If all were lost but these we would have lost nothing. For spiritual truth is stated poorly, very poorly, in abstract thought. Jesus used it very little. When he did not use metaphor, he turned to the concrete in personal actions. Such we saw was the Sermon on the Mount. The only parallel to the parables of Jesus are his actions. Jesus the saviour alone surpasses Jesus the teacher in parables. These two go together and make up the life and work of Jesus. In parables and in Gethsemane is where we find Jesus. There his personality finds supreme expression, supreme love, supreme revelation of the Father.

Look at the truth in its many phases set forth in these parables. The home with the faithful though jealous brother and the prodigal though repentant son; the good Samaritan; the shepherd's care; the divine

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\*A preliminary work of critical study is to determine which are and which are not the parables of Jesus. One is quite obviously not his: Luke 16:19-31. The thought is out of harmony and the introduction differs from the others—"Now there was a certain rich man." So we relieve ourselves of severe difficulties of exegesis and do no violence to the record by discarding this parable as not one of Jesus'.

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food and life going forth in man; the evolutionary laws of growth and development in human life, physical and spiritual, as seen in birds and seeds; the eternal gulf between good and evil; the life of service is the life of heaven; the missionary task and forgiveness to the uttermost; unfaithfulness and unappreciativeness; salvation for all; divine compassion going forth for all again and again; rewards and ability to serve, etc., etc. The whole realm of spiritual truth is covered.

There is no argument or reasoning with a metaphor. It is either take it or reject it. It usually follows argument. In a flash the mind "sees" the truth. Instant understanding is its supreme value. Otherwise, there is no occasion for it. It brings to us the truth axiomatically. We accept it as self-evidently true because it comes to us harmoniously related to life. It assumes this and is of value only as it realizes it. People perceive the truth only as it is pictured in their lives and as far as they have lived.

One must live with sheep and the shepherd to "see" anything in "The Good Shepherd." He must put yeast into bread dough in order to catch the meaning of the leaven of love in life. Metaphors lose their ability to picture the truth and new ones take their place. When it is necessary to explain a metaphor or parable, drop it and create a new one. As the natural life changes and enlarges, the field of available figures enlarges. What material for setting forth spiritual truth is available in the new metaphor that can be



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drawn from the dynamo, the radio and all electrical science. What wonderful stories for children from child fancies and imaginations. What illustrations from history. Jesus did not exhaust the realm. He mastered it and set us on the way.

We do not need to explain him here, or contradict him, or contrast the record and estimate the witnesses in their mental judgments. Words and phrases do not count here. The writers cannot misrepresent. "It is like this." There never would be a Bible commentary or exposition or a theological controversy or a psychological evaluation if we had there recorded only the metaphors of Jesus. All we would need to do would be to say "come and see." I tell you it is wonderfully heartening to come to the parables of Jesus. It is a great criticism, too, piercing even to the dividing asunder of analysis and life giving utterance. How much of the divine power and life do you have for hungry men? The parables of Jesus will tell you.

Jesus observed life; the plain, common, every day life about him. His observation was piercing and discerning. In this is seen his divinity in a remarkable way. It is as though he had made the life he told of. He is the inventor of the machine. Yea, more, he seems to be the creator of the materials used. Everything opens up to his touch. And one thinks the next moment he will bring forth some new form taking shape rapidly before his eyes as the growing tree or the new born babe. One is ready to believe any report

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of him. The mind turns giddy as he lays open all life. What a vision through his eyes. And as we see the physical life about, so the spiritual is opened up before us. Details appear we never dreamed of. Conceptions and experiences challenge us to personal realization. And we dedicate ourselves to newness of life with God. Just read his story and live. That is the only commentary on the parables.

Take the parable of the judgment in Matthew chap. 25. The theologians can have a serious time with this. The angels, the throne, the Son of man coming in his glory. The nations gathering as sheep and goats and being separated right and left. The good are welcomed, the bad cast forth; eternal life for the one, eternal punishment for the others. Are these the conceptions of a loving heavenly Father? An eternal hell for folks that have never had a chance to live? Is Jesus absent and coming only at a distant time and for the moment only to judge? Are we all to wait for divine approval or condemnation till some last day? Who are those angelic beings? Do they appear to men today?

What a lot of big questions might arise as we bring this figure down and make it go on all fours. What queer notions of life they had those days.—But are these the great truth of the picture? Step back till you cannot see the marks of the brush. Then, only one thing is visible and it holds one spell-bound. Fellowship with Jesus is fellowship with men. Love is shown

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in helpful service. Serve one man in need and you serve all men. This is human solidarity and the union of men and God. One's heart beats in sympathy with all. This is life and life forever. Think on it and relate it to your day and thought as they did to theirs. To be sure, if Jesus were to teach it to us today he would paint it with our paint and brushes. Whether he used those exact words recorded or not (in all probability they are the words of the writers as best they can recall them as the words of Jesus) is of no concern. He saw to it that they caught the meaning. And to the untutored mind that reads the parable, I am persuaded will come a great love for men and dedication to a loving service of men and God.

Indeed, the parables are the best form of teaching. They are free and easy language and lose little or nothing from not being the report of a stenographer present when Jesus uttered them. The thought form may have been his and may not. He probably used their conception as his own and was unable to put the truth any other way. Or they may have caught his truth and reported it much modified by their own preconceptions. No doubt there was much of this. We may never know how much. But however those things turn out, the very nature of the parable saves the parable.

The physical metaphors and parables of Jesus (most of them) are capable of larger and larger meaning. As our natural experience of father and son means

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more and more through the years, it becomes all the more a finer metaphor for shadowing forth the ever enlarging spiritual relation. Just as the word "God" has a greater and richer content each age. And right here it is well to remark the nature of all language. It is the content and meaning of a term or phrase we should determine the very first thing. What is meant when a term is used? This prevents much argument and questioning.

What I am aiming at is this: the parables need little comment, the religious truth intended in them is little affected by local thought, they belong to all time, they go direct to the heart and arouse new life as nothing else can do, all debate and argument stops and they are the nearest to action and life that truth can come and still be in words and not real life. Therefore teach in parables. Read the parables of Jesus. And then read them again.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### The Rejected Jesus

#### (a) THE SIX INSTANCES OF REJECTION.

**T**HE five chapters of Matthew, (10-14) furnish the material for this chapter. Of this record, the heart has been torn out, (chap. 11:25-30) and treated in another chapter. This is well. For these verses are the mind of victory in the midst of defeat and rejection. The rest of the five chapters up to chap. 14:12, 23, is a record of rejection. This comes from six quarters. Each one cuts to the quick of the highly-sensitive, divine Jesus. His disciples are rejected and persecuted. His friend John the Baptist in prison doubts his mission and Capernaum goes unrepentant. The Pharisees challenge him. His family call him to time. The mass of the people have ears but hear not. And the king takes the life of his best friend, John the Baptist. Surely troubles all come at once. His "year of popularity" surges back upon him with an ocean wave of disfavor. Opposition sets in not to end till in wrath and hate he is done to death. Can the purest soul ride the wave of insult, argument, accusation, slander and injustice? Can the most loving and trustful heart break on the rocks and go down to death true to the Father and alive forever more?

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(1) A careful study of each rejection, giving considerable attention to details is quite helpful to understand the nature of the spirit life in the midst of rejection or opposition. In the first instance (chap. 10), we have Jesus charging his disciples and sending them forth. The parallel account in Luke refers to seventy sent forth and returning. And the whole matter appears to be a record of Jesus' statements not only to a few disciples on a particular mission, but to all his followers as related to the unchristian world. They are commissioned, cautioned and encouraged. And they are told the cost of service and its rewards.

All is written as though with regard to a particular instance. But vs. 23 shows that the writer is at a time years after the crucifixion and is dealing with the larger matter of discipleship for all of us. Preach that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Enter every open door. You are as sheep in the midst of wolves. You will be hated and persecuted. Fear not to declare the whole truth, or physical death. Fear only soul death. It is a moral battle that divides the most intimate kinships. That is the cross for you even to the loss of life. You shall have your reward in the larger life and to the last penny. You are not above me and your rejection is my rejection. I live in you and I am with you in your suffering. The bargain is struck between us. We work together and we die together. And it is the dying together which I am emphasizing—this is straight talk from a leader to his followers. And it shows the terri-



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ble load of responsibility that comes to the leader. Yet it shows also faith like to that of the Son of God, that the cause is the cause of God, absolutely right and sure to be life at its best. The rejected are victorious in real life.

(2) The second instance (chap. 11), concerns the prophet John, between whom and Jesus there is a wonderful fellowship. Never will Jesus forget his plain preaching of repentance and his making way for his ministry, blessing him as he steps aside. No tribute from Jesus is too high. He is the greatest of all the prophets—a firm, tested, divine revealer. How it pained him when John was cast into prison. All the circumstances come again to his mind. At the time, Jesus wondered if he could have been as courageous. And now the one who ordained him to his ministry loses faith in him. In prison, doubts easily arise. Jesus overlooks and forgives, knowing the circumstances. But he cannot refrain from comparing his own experiences with that of John. Failure, doubt and possibly death are the reward of John. Is it not of himself also? Before him sweeps the whole panorama. What are the people like? Such children. John came severe and plain spoken, and no fellowship with them in their pleasures. Jesus ate and drank with them. Both had failed.

Young, ambitious and moved with high ideals, Jesus chose Galilee and Capernaum as the place where he would establish his community of brotherly love. What

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a future he had for that city and others if they would adopt his social order. How it might be as though set on a hill, an example of community brotherhood. For a time he thought the people would take to his message. So he did his best. Works and teachings enough to save Sodom. How I loved that city. But no. They would not. Woe unto you! My message was right. I did the only thing possible. I have the only way. Even yet there goes forth my old plea. Foolish, weary, heavy-laden. Come unto me. Rest, I have rest, an easy yoke and light burdens.—To be so tremendously right, loving and helpful, yet so completely rejected: was it ever so in all history?

(3) The third instance, (chap. 12:1-45), is the hostility of the Pharisees, the religious rulers of Israel. Regard for the formal, ceremonial rules at the cost of life is disregarded. The Sabbath law of expediency is set aside in the interest of life and health. The Pharisees object. Jesus soon routes them with argument. They return with a ridiculous challenge of the source of his power to cast out devils. Again they are defeated and the enormity of their base charge declared. "Ye off-spring of vipers.", "Your malicious judgments come from the treasure-house of your malicious nature." Once more they attack with a demand for a sign. This Jesus flatly refuses and again lays open to them their evil nature and calls them to the repentance of Jonah.

In all this matter, one striking difference is to be ob-

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served in the attitude of Jesus toward the rejection of the people and that of the Pharisees. The people call forth his pity and compassion. The Pharisees call forth his sharp and most violent condemnation. He cannot speak too plainly in rebuking those who have the time and opportunity of knowing the truth and yet who so utterly disregard it and allow themselves to be bound down to dead forms. This is always his attitude toward these "blind guides." But the rejection of these rulers, nevertheless, is bitter to his soul. Indeed, it is the rejection fullest of tragedy. For authority is with them.

(4) But the fourth instance, (chap. 12:46-50; John 7:3-5), has a peculiar sting to it. His family stand without and are impatient that he can give them no attention. They have a matter more important than his arguments with the Pharisees. As it was when Jesus was twelve years old, they do not yet understand him or see the value of his ministry. They have no faith in him. This is a hard matter, when those nearest to one fail to enter sympathetically into one's work. To the last person, even his mother, there is no real fellowship or cooperative endeavor.

(5) A fifth instance (chap. 13), again brings forth the rejection of the masses. They have no spiritual insight. Seven wonderful parables are spoken to shadow forth his teaching and experience. In various ways, the kingdom of heaven is defined. Yet the meaning is not grasped by the masses because they have not

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experienced the larger spiritual values. This is not unusual. It is the same as it was with Isaiah. The fact is, he must interpret his meaning to the disciples themselves. The great throng goes by unheeding. Even in his old home town, they are amazed at his teaching but cannot get away from the binding force of small town associations. No one can outgrow his humble origins. Thus they stumble over him. And to the rejection of all the rest is added that of his own home town. No use to do works in the presence of such unbelief. Plainly the vote of the people is against him. The people are ignorantly duped by their leaders, to be sure. But they are not without responsibility. They do not try to find out the truth for themselves.

(6) But another fact strangely affects Jesus in the sixth instance of rejection (chap. 14:1-12). His best friend is put to death by Herod. The incident is related in Matthew with uncertain purpose. But vss. 12, 13 and 23 indicate how Jesus received the news. He withdrew to a desert place, privately. The people came upon him. He gave attention to them. Then he sent them away, compelled the disciples to embark for the other side of the lake and himself "went up into the mountain privately to pray."

However these verses are explained, the point of interest to us just now is the fact that John is put to death by Herod. Jesus must have been deeply affected. The whole scene comes vividly before him. The cruel injustice to John and the base, weak and licentious

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Herod. Would he not do as much to him? Across his path came the shadow of the Roman Empire, unjust, merciless, grasping, oppressive, autocratic, tyrannical. Everything in the soul of Jesus revolted against everything in the Roman Empire. All the old Hebrew ideals were crushed by it. Against its whole system of oppression, he had spoken in no uncertain terms. Would it not have its revenge? Away from the people and a night in prayer in the mountain. Soon or late what came to John would come to him. It was a black night for Jesus. Communion with the Father alone could help him.

Thus we see opposition arising on every hand. In these ways and others as definite and unmistakable, the truth came home to Jesus that his message had been put across. He would have many more ovations. The people would listen to him, but it would be a critical audience, not one enthusiastically giving itself to him. They would ask questions, but only to make sure his teaching for condemnation. He could teach his few disciples, but he could not hide from them the tragic outcome for himself and for them. He could not be blind to the fact that their allegiance to him was that of despair—"Will you also leave me?"

The popularity and success were gone. Henceforth the realm of teaching and action for him was the realm of personal values of life and death. He must seal up his message with his life. Wonderful and divine privilege that comes to only the great souls. This

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crushing moment is the white heat of love and hate that melts the soul into the living stream of humanity. From this time on, every event related in the gospels is conflict and every step leads to tragedy and the cross. From the sixteenth chapter of Matthew to the end of the book, this is the chief thing recorded. His teachings are reiterated, but in self-defence. He is no longer the original, fascinating bringer of good tidings all are hungry to hear and willing to accept. His words are often sharp. His soul flashes and flames at his accusers. It also finally rises into calm, silent powerful, victorious love and trust, with a true victory that draws all men unto him.

### (b) FOURFOLD REJECTION.

(1) Four parties forsake Jesus at this time and take their places on the stage for the final act: The family, the people, the priests, the rulers. The part played by the family of Jesus is that of patronizing. They are loyal to him. He may always come home to them. They agree with him but criticize. He should be more careful and use better judgment. There is no need of offending the priests or of opposing the Roman Government. He cannot get on without organization. So it is better to work with people in their usual forms. Nothing can be done when the good-will of folks is gone.

"Be not so radical," his family reasons. "You go too far. You spoil the good you might have



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done. If you keep on you will not only be shut out of the synagogues but you will land in prison. We beg you to be more moderate. Do you not have any love or regard for us? You must remember this is the only home you have. How much do you contribute to the family income? Then, too, while we agree with you in the main, we do not understand you. Don't you claim too much? It is your overstatements that defeat you. We verily believe you could have been the Messiah. You have it in you. But you are losing out fast with the people. A year ago they would have done anything you said. But you have thrown away your chance. There is no sense in the way you are doing. Remember no man knows it all. Is it possible that ALL the priests are wrong and you are right? You do not seem to grant them a single point. You even call them wolves in sheep's clothing. Do you mean that is the case with the ruler of our synagogue? Just think what you say. There is a great work for you to do and you can count on us all to help. But do listen a little to reason, etc., etc." I verily believe there is no opposition like the sincere affection of one's own family—with tears in their eyes and clinging to one's neck.

(2) What means the rejection of the people? It may mean much and it may mean very little. The people have always had their representatives. They speak and act for the people. Whether they are democratically elected or self-appointed, their action is an

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attempt to be the people's action. But there is an action of the people which is apart from and over the heads of the people's representatives. This can be secured in any matter by going directly to them. And when it comes to new truth, the people are the only hope. Old forms will not hold it, especially when they are so completely contrary to life. These forms grip the established authorities with a firm grip. Human life is to be rebuilt and revived. To do this is to begin with the raw material. So to the people Jesus went with his new wine and new wine skins.\* In them he sowed his seed and from them he secured his followers and formed his organization.

There is no doubt but that the seed germinated and grew according to his parable of the sower. Much of it took firm root and never died. Witness his disciples after his crucifixion, the three thousand converted a little later and the world now coming to him for life. There is no mistake about Jesus' method and his success with the people. But wherein is the rejection of the mass of the people? To be sure they shouted his praises but they also cried "Crucify him!" How much did Jesus consider this a rejection? Well, so much that he wept over it. Yet he blamed them never. It was always compassion on the multitude as

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\*I have no sympathy with those who assert that Jesus brought inspiration and life, power and love, but not any particular order or form therefor. That was for men to build. There is no life or power without its law or order or form. Jesus had his order and stated it. He had his organization, just as much as he needed, in his disciples. His first church in organization was the nature and law of the kingdom of God in practical form. And the ages have not improved on it, only modified it to meet local conditions.

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sheep without a shepherd. He knows that he has had no chance with them. They have not understood. The machinery of information was not in his hands. He reached only a few. The harvest was ready but no way or persons to gather it. Could he have multiplied himself, there would have been no question as to the outcome. As far as he had gone with them he had succeeded. He had to do many things at once and all in the regular ways of life. It was this that broke his heart. Their rejection was very unlike that of the priests. He hoped to succeed with the priests. With the people he had no reasonable hope of present success. Therefore he sharply condemned the one, and wept over the other. Their cry in the mob on the last day was the cry of ignorance, of people who had not heard and did not perceive. It pierced his heart. It was a pitiable thing. It had in it a challenge but not a defeat. They were the natural field of his salvation, which he started to enter and from which he never has turned back.

(3) and (4) With the rulers of the church and the state it was very different. And it was met in a different way. They knew what Jesus taught and perceived his spirit. They were without excuse. Theirs was the crime of the crucifixion. Theirs was premeditated murder, while the people's was misdirected hate. Both are a despicable thing. But in the two groups, the one was fixed and the other could be removed. Many rulers were doubtless with him, as Nicodemus and the sol-

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dier watching him die, but not the great majority or the truly influential ones. Many of the people would have rejected him had they known him well but not the greater part. This fact of official rejection, aside from the crucifixion of Jesus, dealt with in another chapter, needs explanation. Why were the rulers, the religious and civil rulers, so naturally and unchangeably rejecting him?

Jesus aims to transform government (so-called democratic government the same as autocratic government) from a thing of empty, authoritative machinery for the selfish ends of a few at great cost to all, into an organized activity of service for all, true to human life and the natural expression of the power of life. For the government that is busy from the top down maintaining its authority, whether democratically formed or not, he condemned in no uncertain terms. And for it, he substituted organized service in the interests of all.

True democracy leads this way. And our democracy in the United States is always undergoing transformation in this direction. This causes a disrespect of its formal authority and the winning and building up anew of popular respect because of its new, enlarged activity. At the same time, the officers hasten to save the old authority by a demand and an enforcement of old abandoned laws. There is a great hue and cry for respect for law—all law—"back to normalcy," etc., etc. With this goes the punishment of

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all who are agitating for the enlarged activity as teaching disobedience to law. Of course they cannot get an office. People are too uncertain what to do. Prison and death are their heritage and they may be thankful if they escape these. They will escape them only as the enlarged activity becomes popular.

Such was the situation of Jesus and is of all his followers. With him, it was an herculean task, a terrible bitter conflict. He was halting formal government and turning it into this new channel for the first time, or when it was a well nigh impossible task. This accounts for his falling out with the officers of both religion and politics. It is the real reason for their rejection of him at this time, and their fanatical measures to crush him in the end. Much of sincerity was no doubt on their side. They often thought they were saving civilization—by destroying human life, *by wholesale*. "Better one man die than a whole nation be destroyed," said they. These men listened to Jesus at first gladly and sympathetically, then critically, then with hostility. Their official positions naturally forced them to take their course. But such action under such conditions reveals a moral weakness, a lack of courage to venture on what they recognize is new and cannot be overturned by reason. They put aside the living truth for fear of a little confusion, especially to themselves, incident to the change. Such are unworthy, as Jesus states, of his kingdom of God. There is no doubt about Jesus being a progressive and a radical

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in the true sense. He grew new roots for real life. And he had the moral courage for such work. Therefore humanity in after years condemns the officer in church and state and approves the radical, chiefly on the moral basis. It knows its true friends.

And so with all four groups rejecting Jesus. Ultimately it is a case with all, of moral insight and moral courage. Whether or not they saw the true nature of the life Jesus revealed, they were not true to that life. It has its springs in the moral and spiritual life. Power to become or power to lay down one life and take up the other was not in them. The man truly alive is thereby truly progressive and finds communion at once with all progressives. This is the abundant life.



## CHAPTER XV.

### Jesus "Who Is Called Christ"

THE Messianic idea as the framework of the book of Matthew and chaps. 24 and 25 together with the Messianic conceptions of the other Biblical writers is the subject for this chapter.

We use the word "Christian" every day. We all know its origin. The disciples were first called "Christian" in Antioch. And I feel sure they will always be called by that name. Jesus Christ is the name we all have accepted and he accepted. His parents gave him one name and the people the other. He had nothing to say about it as usual. And the disciples had nothing to say. It is the same with all movements and persons. The name always comes from some very evident characteristic of infancy. It always will be so.

When men began to take note of the rotation of the earth on its axis they made the easy, evident, surface observation that the sun rose each morning and set each evening. So they said "sun-rise" and "sun-set." And I feel sure it will be that way till the end of time. The phrase was used in all seriousness. The folks at the dawn of human life were very certain they were stating a fact of the physical world. And however much we may learn better, the old expressions will stay with us. They are very convenient and will be so at

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least till our correct scientific thought of those great events becomes second nature to all. By that time there is a possibility, yea verily a strong probability, that these expressions may have gradually taken on the new and correct meaning and will therefore continue to be the only ones used.

It is the same way with the name "Christ." The greatest thought and hope of the time of Jesus was gathered into the word "Christ." Throughout all the Roman Empire, the hope of the working people, who were the slave people and included most of the people of the empire, was in a Messiah to deliver them. They dreamed of a Messiah to lead them in revolt against their hated masters. And the tens of thousands of strikes of these people, of whom was Jesus, were always led by a Messiah. Such they wanted to make Jesus. But he was a different kind of a Messiah. "Love your enemies—your masters," cooled their ardor. Yet his abilities and personalities so gripped them that they continued to force the role upon him. They were always compelling him to be their Messiah. He would lead them under his own terms of love and service. But they never struck an agreement. Nevertheless the name "Messiah" stuck to him.

Also in the restricted Jewish and religious sense, the name came to him. The religious leaders, familiar with the Old Testament idea of a Messiah, dealt with the matter. They denied that he was the Messiah. Their opposition only served to fasten the name the more

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upon him. His Jewish followers, being both humble and religious, were thinking him the Messiah from both angles and many of them in the larger way in which Jesus was willing to be such. He used the term very much as an astronomer uses "sunrise" and "sunset." But they had a big task to get the matter settled. Indeed it never was settled. Yet arguments were many. Most of the discussions and reasonings of the New Testament writers were to establish this fact in the face of the strongest denial. All theology since, till recently, because based on their reasoning, has perpetuated the conception and the discussion. Jesus "is the Christ." Most Christian people still use it with the New Testament conception in their minds. Though they do not stop to explain why. And folks who know better and understand the true ministry of Jesus in a much larger conception, continue to use it. Maybe when all understand better, it will still continue to be used by all with the new and larger meaning having gradually supplanted the restricted meaning.

But it is not so used in this book. The name "Jesus" which his mother gave him is the only name proper here. Only a little regard for scientific accuracy soon compels one either to drop the name "Christ" entirely or use it only in a very much restricted sense. Indeed, the very purpose of this book requires an explanation of the term. Bousset states in Berguer's *Aspects of the Life of Jesus* (p, 240), "The idea of the Messiah forms a part of the national hope and

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the national religion of Judaism. The popular Jewish hope looked for a king sent by and of the race of David who, as a powerful chief with sword in hand, would smite the Gentiles, annihilate Rome, proclaim his dominion over the world at Jerusalem, and then, upheld by the spirit of God, reign henceforth with wisdom and gentleness over the faithful and the submissive Gentiles." And this is the faith of many people today who desire to be faithful to the Bible. It is modified a little to be sure. He is not to be on the throne of David. The Gentiles are those not Christian. And his coming again on the clouds is to be the inauguration of it all. It is his second coming now. With the Jews it was his first coming. Even those Christians who reject a second physical coming, still, many of them, hold to the correctness of these Bible writings.

So this is no small problem. And the first thing to be noted is that this national conception, as well as the world economic Messiah was all formed when Jesus arrived. It was a bright flame in every heart, an eternal fire on the nation's altar. I do not need to describe it here in any detail. Our problem is Jesus' attitude and the place of this idea in our thought today. Of the first, it can be truly stated, Jesus did not wish to be this. All his great teachings are in complete contrast to it. His actions and life are lifted far above the narrow limits of this national ideal. His purpose was larger and he repeatedly defined it in his expression, "the kingdom of God." The people thrust him into it

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during and after his ministry. Again and again he is embarrassed by their narrow enthusiasm. And he is continually put to task to enlarge their ideal and to avoid complete break with them. He himself was born a part of their conception and outgrew it and he did his best to stir up his nation to a larger world faith. The kingdom of heaven is not here nor there. Nor does it come with signs at some moment. It is a vital force in the soul and a brotherhood among men. His success, too, was marvelous. They held to the old conception, but it is modified a little. In it is buried the truth of Jesus. While they still think it is chief and build all their reasoning with its old materials, still, the living Jesus is there transforming their lives and easily found when one reads their writings. But what I am getting at is this Messiah framework. It is everywhere present and everywhere in sharp contrast with the great work of Jesus.

To maintain itself thus in their thought in spite of the tremendous transforming power of Jesus is no small task. The New Testament writers all live and write after Jesus is gone. And they are put to it to adjust this fact to their idea. This gives rise to their hope of a second coming of Jesus. There is no faith in a dead man as a leader, especially when he had failed to realize their ideal while living. They had maintained his Messiahship while living. His power still gripped their lives. They must continue to do so or the first assertion is false. They will not back down

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now. That they do not, argues much for Jesus' divine life-giving power. Had they given up then it would have been a calamity.

Therefore out of the teachings of Jesus concerning the future life and spirit coming to spirit in communion after he is gone, the worship in spirit and in truth, they built their argument. He must come again and reign supreme. He has not done so yet. But he will. He will judge men at the last. He is supreme not only in Israel but also over all the world, but not with Gentiles subject to Jews. Their idea has grown a little. He sits on his throne and all nations come before him, judged on the basis of service to men and fellowship with the Christ. The only Jewish supremacy is that it all comes out of Israel. That seems to maintain the line of succession. However it must all be in their age. He must come on the clouds with glory and might while they live. Their generation will not pass till all is settled. Even the end of the age will be with them.

Watch. Be ready. Beware of false Christs. He comes at an hour when you least think. Be wise and faithful till he comes. He will give judgment and reward to the righteous, even eternal life.—Such is the reasoning of chaps. 24 and 25 of Matthew. Such is the reasoning of Paul in his earlier writings and even till late in life. The other gospels are in harmony. (Save John and possibly II Peter; both written long after Jesus lived. By that time hope de-



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layed had made the heart sick of his physical coming on the clouds. What Jesus said is in all probability truly set forth in John 14:21-23.) All the apocalyptic writings of the Jews fit well into this. The writer of Matthew is fed up well on these things, so much so that they are first in his thought. They bulk so large that Jesus must agree, fulfill and realize them or he is nothing. And to be able to do that to their satisfaction and yet not bind himself to them but to be much more and actually establish this fact also in their life is God in Jesus and no doubt about it.

So they lived and wrote and died. How now with us Christians? One fact more is to be added. Jesus did not come on the clouds with power and glory and angels in their generation, nor in the second generation, nor at any age since. Nineteen centuries have gone and still he has not come in that way. Many have expected and were disappointed. And many live today who read these reasonings trustfully and make a simple application to this day only to be disappointed again. Is this thing to go on forever? Hope and live on it only to be denied in the end? Is this a necessary experience of Christians forever? Is there nothing else possible? Ought not the fact of Jesus' not coming thus even after nineteen centuries to have its weight? I believe it must. This alone settles beyond all question that the folks of that time were mistaken. And we do not need to continue their folly simply to maintain the notion that nothing in the Bible can be untrue.

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Christians then, now and always, in their religious life as in all religious experience, had much of the untrue mixed with the true. And it is the nature of religious life to get not a little comfort even out of false notions or to think so at least. All life lives and grows weighted down with outgrown dead things.

Surely we have come to the time when we can struggle up free from one more hindrance, namely, the whole Messianic conception. Our thought stands free in ideas of the future life. We know the judgment of Jesus and God is not of a great last day to come but is the conscious experience of daily fellowship in spirit and truth. We have constructed an entirely new eschatology which is vital and does not violate every principle of reasoning. We know these writings of the Bible must be studied with three things ever in mind. How much, if at all, was Jesus the product of his age and by nature compelled to put his life into such contemporary thought? How well did the writers catch his meaning and express it accurately? How much, if not very much, of their own preconceived notions got into their writings? These three things are always before us in reading the Bible. We may never determine them exactly. But they are there, whatever notion of inspiration and revelation possesses us. And they indeed compel us in connection with the other great fact stated above to take a new course.

However it came about, these two chapters, with all the other literature pertinent, set forth a mistaken

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viewpoint. Let us take that position and stand there. They were wrong in their thinking. Just as their fathers were wrong about "sunrise" and "sunset." The heavens do not fall when we say this. Idealism still has its place. But personalism gets a higher place. It is not the first time men failed to think accurately, nor the only subject whereon has been made a false statement. Blunders are the very nature of human thinking. Misunderstanding of, or only partly realizing God's revelations is the common religious experience of men.

Why such fear to recognize and admit one of our follies? Is the religious truth therein destroyed? Or the activity in religion lessened? Or the reliability of the record taken away? Not for a moment. Only this occurs. We have a new freedom. We see the truth more clearly, though in a different sense. We discover their experiences are like our own and agree with those of all men. Human solidarity, even in religion, becomes more surely established. We live more earnestly and more confident of divine fellowship with imperfect humanity. I give it as my testimony that I have long since ceased to think of those Messianic conceptions as correct. Yet the eternal spiritual life manifested in them, the fine, victorious optimism in a dying age, still appeals to me profoundly. The parable of the ten virgins, the talents and the judgment have a new meaning to me. A meaning far more nearly what Jesus intended to say in them.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### Perfection or Life

**I**N the Sermon on the Mount, (chap. 5:48) it states, "Be ye perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect." This I passed over at the time. But now it is necessary to deal with it as we approach the great things in the experience of Jesus and his disciples. The Bible and most Christians assume the perfection of Jesus and rob him of real moral worth. He, of course, does right because he is perfect not because he has lived a moral victory as all persons must do in order to have done right.

The aim, therefore, of this chapter is to remove the one chief corruption of Jesus' revelation and divine living. Mischievous, abstract thinking leads folks astray and centers their devotions in impossible hopes and aspirations. These have been called Christian, but they are not. We must strip them away before we can see the genuine and the true. The chief of these unrealities is holiness, perfection or absolute purity of soul. Millions on millions of every nation there be that go zealously searching for it; unhappy all the time; enduring all manner of torture, condemnation and sacrifice; ever catching up yet never obtaining. The peace of mind and heart that is the right of every person

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never comes their way. The salvation in Jesus never reaches their solitary and individualistic turmoil. Let us see if we can escape all this and find the true personal religious life. We will have to be rid of it before we can form any clear conception of personality and its activity.

In mathematics and purely intellectual processes, there is the conception of perfection. But it is simply a mental conception not a concrete reality. The perfect circle is mental, not material reality. No man ever forms a material thing into a perfect circle or a perfect square. The perfect symphony has never been written, much less rendered. The perfect song was never sung and never will be sung. In social and moral things, it is the same. The ideal state, the perfect society is only a mental ideal. It is not a reality. Any one who takes part in politics or does the work of a constructive statesman, never realizes the perfect order. The ideal of honesty and right conduct comes far from realization. We still wait for the perfect moral code. When will it be a reality in men? Whatever it is, human things or divine manifestations, the reality is not perfect. Only the mental ideal is perfect.

Now the idea is that the love of Jesus is perfect. He is cleansed and sanctified and made perfectly holy. Perfectly pure in heart, his trust and obedience measure to the ideal of perfection. He has realized our ideal. For this, too, we are to strive. The cleansing, sanctifying process; the making holy is to go on till no sin

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is left in us, and our love and trust is as that of Jesus, perfect and divine. Even if never realized, we are to strive earnestly to fulfill this ideal of perfection. Have the ideal, strive for it and attain it. Jesus attained it. So must we. What we are to do when we have attained it is not suggested.

But there is not a little mischief in all this, both as applied to Jesus and as striven for by us. In both cases we must drop the ideal as an end if we are to understand and attain. Jesus' supreme experience was his trustful obedience to the Father, including also his love for his brethren. This is his life everlasting. It is our eternal life also. The prayer, "Thy will be done." and "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do," is the supreme spiritual reality in Jesus. Not an ideal before him but a concrete reality. Something experienced as it was being uttered. If there is any perfection in Jesus it was here. Yet this perfection comes in acts and behaviour of personal wills; the relations between Jesus, the Father and those crucifying him. He is living, not striving to attain an ideal. The things he thought and taught, he lives and we bow the head and bend the knee. That concrete life, that actual realization is the power that draws, that compels, that wins, that saves.

Further, this is social, not solitary. He is not an individual in solitude, closeted from men, gaining a spiritual victory; but a personal will struggling to victory in the midst of other personal wills; in a multi-



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tude of social relations, the finest and holiest things of life, coming forth supreme—master in the art of arts. When he prays alone with the Father, he must STEAL a moment from the society of men. People all about him and always about him. A victory and a life in society not in solitude. Here in truth Jesus is the Saviour of the world; for he is in the world and a part of it. He has no existence or experiences outside of personal relations; realities of life, not ideals. If he had ideals, he did not let them creep into his prayers. As we see him during those days, our attention is turned from ideals to men, to living social relations and experiences. We long to get into life, social life, the affairs of men, politics and priest-craft, the mob and all.

Solitude, individualism, idealism, a life not yet real, striving to reach a perfect state and then come into society to save it and bring it to the same high state—all this is lost sight of. A real life of love and trust in a real society, that is the holiness of Jesus, the super-excellence and perfection; a living, growing thing not a static ideal. If we draw nigh to Jesus, it will not be by losing sight of men and the world in a mystical, solitary approach. We will not find him there, alone. We will need to make many social ties and personal contacts, a multitude of human relations, true not to abstract laws and customs, the ideals of life, but to living persons active as we are. There in the midst of it all, we will find Jesus doing the same thing; living the life of loving trust and obedience, the center of the

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group. We will be so charmed, uplifted, taught, inspired, won, saved to the same life, we will not think of ideals and standards of measure. The living contact with Jesus in the meshes of relationships will leave room for nothing more. Above and beyond ideals to life. Away from fixed, static measures to life. This, too, is the experience of Jesus.

Just as soon as we compare persons, good, better, best, perfect, and give Jesus the place beyond and away above all others, ideally perfect, that moment he loses his place as a person among persons and coincides with our abstract ideal conception. That moment, too, our striving is toward an ideal and not toward a person. We are absorbed in that one attainment. Concrete, imperfect, living relations to persons are not desired or sought after. Outward religious practices in words and deeds are cut off. Imperfection is too evident there. Intellectual activity regarding religious matters is shut out. Only inner heart sentiments and motives are considered, and these in an abstract and mystical way. They have little chance to go forth in action. For when so, they are quite imperfect or are made so by an imperfect world. The inner motion of spirit, the mystical love and trust of the heart, in this inner court, perfection is sought. Yet he that "so loved the world" also "gave his only." The two are inseparably united. If one is perfect, the other is also. Love apart from deed is a fiction. When men seek qualities of life before life's relationships they chase

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after fancies. Abstract, ideal love free from imperfect lovely deeds and thoughts is no more than fruit apart from grapes, figs or apples; nor is it any more satisfying. No wonder, with such continual looking within and such insistent disregard of outward manifestations—no wonder there arises such distorted and fanatical unloveliness in social relations, and such monastic asceticism in meditation.

But from all this we are happily delivered by Jesus. An age of individualism alone could find comfort therein. Universal and world-wide brotherhood in all social and institutional relations robs it of all inspiration. Men are seen as persons, but always inseparable from other persons and without existence as soon as those bonds are broken. If holy, they must be so in their society. The student of social institutions has made this evident beyond all question. The psychologist also, has rendered a great service here. He has gone into the secret chambers of the soul and laid bare the hidden motives of men. As our ideals and intellectual conceptions of perfection are seen to enlarge and clarify themselves with increased experience, so our inner sentiments are seen to grow. Motives and purposes of men are never wholly true, unselfish and pure.

This safe retreat to good will, good motive and good feeling has been invaded. There are no longer, innermost, sacred retreats of the soul where intellectual analysis, classification and judgments may not enter.

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Such inner things are about as thoroughly dealt with as the open and visible words and deeds. The laws therein are about as well known. No longer can the perfectionist condemn social studies as outside his realm, and retreat supreme, unquestioned and unapproachable to this inner mystic court. He is beset behind and before, has no defence and is given no way of escape. His case is hopeless. According to his own logic, it is as reasonable to be perfect in act as in motive, in loving deeds as in love.

This is well and good for him as for us. For his confusion turns him and us toward the living Jesus. The sum total of the religious life comes before us—conceptions, sentiments and practices. If holiness is to be obtained, it must be in the activities of the personal will in all these realms and in relation to all other personal wills. The desire and love and act are between persons. The persons are our aim. The loving, helpful, trusting attitude is one toward another. The going forth of our souls is toward other souls, not toward ideals, even ideals of life. Thus we fellowship with Jesus. So when our seeking is directed toward persons, we give attention to personal relations. We are held to life.

This will do more. In a different age, on a different road, we will need a different vocabulary, a different system of thought. It will vacate the whole empty and disheartening discussion. Salvation by persons and personal relations. Life values now have their

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true power. The living Jesus appears, not the static Jesus saving men at a particular moment. Vital allegiance to him in all social relations is the question. "The fairest among ten thousand" in these relations, actually and vitally touches us. Our souls respond to the touch. He dominates us. Not to attain goodness in the abstract sense, but to be in harmony with him in all our intricate and varied life. To feel the subtle ethical and spiritual drawings and to yield to them; to be awakened and stirred up in soul attitude; to give one's will over to the filial disposition and will of Jesus in the midst of a real life, individual and social, which amounts to and is an allegiance and faith in God the Father—that is salvation, the living salvation in Jesus. That is the vital power of the experience in Gethsemane, the deepest thing in the religion called Christian. That is the life eternal, never separated for a moment, as in Jesus himself, from word and deed and thought.

So at once our religious zeal is with regard to living relations, to men and God. This is an aim very different from the other. How well suited to it are such words as: loyalty, friendship, companionship, comforter, fellowship, communion, brotherliness, obedience, faith, belief, trust, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, meekness, temperance, kindness, etc., etc. They seem to take on new meaning. Indeed, all the terms of our daily personal relations are at once in demand. Jesus and the Father come into these activities and relations

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of infinite millions of human persons. Indeed, they are there from the first, living with them a personal life. In it all, both in heaven and on earth, the distinction of human and divine persons will remain. Every day these relations multiply. Every day there is a larger life to live. And living this ever enlarging life will be our daily and eternal salvation.

This is true with Jesus as with us. He is not living an ideal life, nor a different life, nor a retired life; his work being done in the past. But he saves today as ever. He did not work his salvation at one time and place; by his death on the cross, "a full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world," and then this salvation once made goes on redeeming men of itself. Not so. His salvation is a growing enlarging reality, as much so and more today than ever. Not his salvation but his living personality is eternally wrought into society and saving it. We have a larger world and life today than when he lived. And he undertakes at once this larger world, this our larger spiritual experience; of larger, more intricate, purer relations. He lives his Gethsemane and the cross today as ever. This is eternal and his salvation is eternal. Rest and the end of salvation in an unenlarging life in men or in Jesus are abstractions, and always will be.

Now what place has perfection in this ever enlarging life? One is loath to give it any place at all. Once again as to the term. When we measure and



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measure distance till the mind can go no farther we call it infinity. Two parallel lines, we consider as meeting at an infinite distance. Out beyond our reach is infinity. As we reach farther, we push infinity out still farther. So in our Christian living we become purer and purer, holier and holier, until we can no longer measure in a mental conception such living and we call it perfection. But this ideal of perfection is pushed out farther and farther as our life enlarges. New ideals are formed. Our highest ideals are growing things. Perfection, therefore, is simply a relative term of our spiritual measuring vocabulary. Stages of growth, good, better, best,—our best we call perfection. How changeable, how mortal and finite is the term. How unreal as number itself. How absurd to be striving for it. What mischief to make it our aim. We do injustice to ourselves and to God. We must sweep it aside and fix our thought and affections on living persons. We are to live, not to strive after the greatest measure of life.

We preach a living God. Do we mean it? A God who lives? Or is it a static being—a person who has ceased to grow according to some last and highest, finished state of life? Is it one who has reached perfection? Or not reaching it by growth, always perfect without beginning or end? If so, in what sense is he the living God? With the common ideal of perfection and the doctrine applied to men and to God, do we have real life? Has not its continual emphasis dwarfed

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and twisted our conceptions of life, human and divine? Must we not get away from it entirely? I think we must.

We have a living human experience, physical and spiritual, a living salvation, a living Jesus, a living God. Life terms alone can describe them. Everything that God has made in all his universe is a changing, growing, active, living thing. If we are to form our conceptions of God by his self-revelation in men and the world—and how else can we know him?—we must conclude that God is a changing, active, living God; realizing a larger life all the time; unchanging only in the constancy and steadfastness of his life. Thus conceiving him, how much more real he becomes to us and how near to us. Such a person can be a loving Father with many personal relations. He gives us a living salvation. He is life, enlarging life, abundant life. I worship a living God in the real sense in which we know life.

Once creation was considered by men as a momentary act. Now it is seen to be a never-ending process. Once salvation was considered to be a momentary act in Jesus and upon men. Now it is seen to be a living eternal process. Once, this salvation once wrought was thought to reach a condition called perfect. Now it is seen to take on continually and eternally larger and larger stages, subject to no limitations, ideals or standards of measurement. An enlarging life must have a growing salvation. For soon

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as the world rises to higher life, it has need of new enlarged powers to save it to still higher life. And such living salvation powers, in God's economy, are not created and held in store for future use. That is not God's way. Hence Jesus' atonement is a living, growing salvation as the basis and inspiration of all. Jesus lives.

But this seems to rob us of so much. The Bible is full of "Holiness unto the Lord." It is. And more. The world is full of it. The church is full of it. Ideals and ideals and more ideals. People true to ideals and "doing their duty," have cut right and left and heartlessly persecuted even to death their best friends. Wars are always waged on ideals and principles. It is always "liberty or death," "save democracy." And it is there that *persons* have had no more value than mules—cannon fodder and sheep for slaughter. While all the time we long for the personal touch, the soul to soul. We want a friend. And Jesus is that friend. See him as such. If we look for it in the world, the church and the Bible, we will find this personal element and Jesus as a personal friend. Persons and things and personal experiences—turn away from the other things and look for these. For, I repeat it, these are the distinctive features of the Christian religion.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### The Will and Person of Jesus

#### (a) THE WILL.

**S**CRIPTURE: Matthew 11:25-30; 20:20-28; Mark 10:35-45. Matthew 11:27 reads: "All things have been delivered unto me of my Father: and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him."—This is the most remarkable statement in all the book of Matthew. Remarkable because so fundamental. Together with the gracious invitation following directly and completing the paragraph, it is the very heart of the book. Its right to a place in the book is as unquestioned as that of John 3:16 in the gospel of John.

Its meaning, too, is just as plain. Jesus himself makes the statement. There is no misunderstanding his words. God the Father alone knows me. And I only know God the Father. No one else knows Him except as I reveal Him. Anyone who desires to know God the Father gets his knowledge through me and at my will. Seeking to know the Father, come to me. It is utterly impossible to understand the Fatherhood of God aside from me. You may have a knowledge of God in other ways without me, but

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not in this wonderful and gracious character. As well try to know and understand the political freedom of America without Lincoln and Washington; the awakening of the Orient without the Christian missionary; the reformation without Luther; the English revival without Wesley, as to undertake to know and understand and come to God as Father, without Jesus. God as gracious heavenly Father loving and caring for us is entirely at the will of his filial, trusting, obedient Son. This is what this statement means if it means anything. Jesus and Jesus alone originates in us the filial, trusting, obedient heart and mind.

In connection with this direct statement of Jesus, it is quite fitting to quote those of the great religious leaders since, disciples and apostles of his. Paul, in Jewish thought, says in Romans 9:21; "Hath not the potter a right over the clay, from the same lump to make one part a vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" So also Augustine in his *God's Foreknowledge and Man's Free Will*, chaps. 9 and 10, states: "In his supreme will resides the power which acts on the wills of all created spirits, helping, judging, controlling, granting power." And: "Our wills have just so much power as God willeth. . . . whatever they are to do, they are most assuredly to do." Also in chapter 32—"Redemption"—"The grace of Christ has alone thrown open the universal way of the soul's deliverance. And again: "This is the way that leads straight to the vision of God and to eternal fel-

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lowship with him." Likewise Calvin, following St. Augustine, in his *Eternal Election*, states the principle: "Our salvation flows from the fountain of God's free mercy, . . . He adopts not all promiscuously to the hope of salvation, but gives to some what he refuses to others. Further, as a reaction against Calvin's *Irresistible Grace*, Arminious says in *Disputation XI*: "In this state, the free will of man towards the true good is not only wounded, maimed, infirm, bent, and weakened, but it is also captive, destroyed and lost. Its powers are not only debilitated and useless, unless they be assisted by grace, but it has no powers whatever except such as are excited by divine grace. Also in *Declaration of Sentiments*: "In his lapsed and sinful state, man is not capable, of and through himself, either to think, to will, or to do that which is really good."—In all these writers, no salvation without the first movement of the will of God.

Now these are marvelous, if not original utterances, and rightly ought to be mentioned in connection with the statement of Jesus. For they reveal at once the chief question at issue, viz., the relation of the human will to the divine will of Jesus and the Father.

But possibly the strongest emphasis of the divine will in the presence of the human will is Paul's argument in Romans (chaps. 8-11). The Jews, he concludes, need to be humbled in the dust. Their pride of race has made them to disregard individual piety. They were sons of Abraham and therefore secure in their



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title to divine favor. They had no need of Christ. So Paul rebukes them and argues the absolute necessity of vital ethical union with Christ. Those who were favored of God and sons of God were those who had been elected of Christ. Nothing can overcome them. Yet the only one who can make them secure, they reject. For hath not God the freedom to choose and elect whom He will; adopting his own plan of salvation? He reserves this right and no man dare say him nay.

On this basis, if Israel rejects the plan of salvation after God has loved and cared for her through the years, can she justly complain if she is not among the chosen of God? Is not the nation responsible? God is supreme, not man. Let Israel keep her place. Yet God has a heart of mercy, blind as Israel has been. A remnant shall be saved. And in the end all Israel shall return to Zion.—Such is the reasoning of Paul in the light of Jesus' words and power. And however it is dealt with, whether by Augustine or Calvin or Arminius, it all turns about the relation of two wills.

So the question stands in the midst of a new and enlarged knowledge and experience. Life is not gathered about one will as the center of a circle. At least two wills must be considered. Not the circle with one center but the ellipse with two centers correctly represents the relation. God is at one center with the human race at the other. The distance from the two centers

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to any point in the curve limiting the field of activity is always the same. It is not one domineering with many beneath, obedient as slaves to the One; as machines doing the will of the One. That is not the order and rule of God the Father. It seems so because we are small and He is great and our center is so near his, indeed, as it were within Him and near his heart center.

Our ellipse comes very near being a circle as the earth's orbit, so big is the sun and so small the earth. But it is not a circle. And there is a distance between God's center and our center. And it will become more and more as we become more and more like God. And this is the order in the whole of life and the world. The orbits of all the planets about the sun are ellipses. The workings of electricity are with a positive and negative pole. How to relate the two? Neither one is more important than the other. In vegetable and animal life it is always the two in relation, not the individual by himself. In human society, it is not life to live as the hermit. No person is his full self till he has found a friend and related his will to that of his friend. If two people can become properly related to each other, they have solved the problem of life. That done, they can relate themselves to a third and to all men and God, in a thousand intricacies, a network infinitely complicated.

When Jesus said no man can come to the Father except I will it, he did not mean that our wills were to

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be disregarded or crushed. It was not, "Break me, Lord, and then use me." The gracious invitation following at once his statement settles that. "Come unto me all ye that are heavily laden, and I will give you rest." The two sentences are inseparable, a part of one solid paragraph. It is all one thought. The greatest respect is to be given to all human wills. Jesus rules and orders, rewards and punishes, chooses and predestinates, not as the autocratic king disregarding others and their purposes, but in the midst of men, in real relations, democratic and brotherly. He has founded and will consummate his kingdom of righteousness under limits and conditions to which he himself submits, as he expects all who are a part of it to do. The crushing and breaking comes only when men fly in the face of it all, desiring their own selfish way, a way contrary to all life. Then surely there is death and ruin.

It is not that God has made a plan and a set of conditions and then created us free and independent and put us therein. If we are not true, destruction will be ours. Not that. But rather, always and especially in Jesus, He comes into a great world family of persons, Himself among them all, and lives it into a million intricate relations. We are there at the first helping in plans and all along. More and more harmony as the years go on. There is no compelling except the compelling grace. It was the greatest venture ever made in the divine economy when God the Father risked the

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revelation of the eternal truth that the ownership, management, and operation of his universe and of human life especially, is not in and through his own will and energy, absolute and alone, but in and through the combined will and energy of himself and men. The discovery and acceptance of that truth, furthermore, on man's part is also the greatest venture in human life.

Wait a million years. If men murder and lie and steal and break away from it all, crushed down and destroyed therefore, by the millions for ages, no matter. The ever-increasing volume and harmony goes on. The kingdom is coming. The world is not going to pieces. Jesus has not failed. Neither is there the cruelty of the tyrant in the fashioning of any one of the vessels of dishonor. It is all the grace of the heavenly Father in his Son, Jesus. What love and peace it will be some day. What life in the family of God.

A Bishop and a Senator of Kansas when young men went to college. The first aimed to be a politician, the second a minister. However, they did not have this preconceived selfish aim dominating. They were open minded and entered whole heartedly into the school life. The process of education ended them in the opposite fields of activity. As they lived into the truth of God, each one was fashioned into the proper vessel. They roomed together. Both were very poor. The struggle was hard for both. They had about the same experiences. Yet see the marvelously opposite results.

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An electrician of this town went out and climbed the telegraph pole to make repairs. He knew the precautions well and the nature of electricity. But he refused the rubber gloves. He refused the strap about the pole. He refused even to turn off the power. He thought he could do the work disregarding the laws in which men and electricity are related. Little wonder he was killed. Yet the power of the current was for fashioning the good, a blessing to men. The dishonor came when the conditions were disregarded.

Perhaps we have been reading these words in the wrong light. See them in the light of love, of the gracious invitation to come to him. The personal will is real only in action. Here the action is love. Love pleads and entreats. It never commands or drives. Here seems to be the contrast. The world is accustomed to the will that drives, but not the will that loves. On that basis, the thinking of the writer of these words about the will was done. But the great mission of Jesus was love. Yet these words seem to be the opposite, to be commanding and forcing or authoritatively active. Can we see the will in the love act? This is not a time of folks pleading and Jesus granting. Both must be loving. Men, Jesus and the Father must be all willing in love together. We must answer to the love of Jesus. How is this done from the volitional realm?

Love is an activity that requires at least two for its realization, voluntarily active. Even love in God re-

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quires love answering from another person as the poles of the magnet. This is a social relation of persons, of whom we are all a part. We are born in God's love. All persons answer naturally to the loving Saviour. There is no divine love apart from us. God does not love first and when his love is grown strong send his love down to us who have been doing no loving.

The love relation between men and God ripens or comes to realization in the cooperative activity of both. This is the abundant life first realized in the two, Jesus and the Father. As that fellowship ripened into love in them it was as it were its first existence in the universe. Then the circle widened until it may include all. It originates in persons and is contagious with us all, unless we will otherwise. The volume and power increase together till not a will can resist it. Thus we come to the Father. The originating work is with Jesus and the Father. And human solidarity and divine fellowship account for the contagious power quickening all of us. The harmony of wills and persons is in the vital relations created. The clash of wills is in the rebellion of anyone from these things.

This is the reverse of the thought of our fathers. They made the mistake of assuming human depravity. There was a conflict of wills to start with. Then salvation was a command or the victory of one will over another. This had to come before the saving life could begin. This was so with the Jews who gave us



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the utterance of Jesus. Maybe they have put the love relation of Jesus to the Father and to men in their own form of thought. That form we know was, independent of Jesus, the form of autocracy, king and subject. This they carried, too, into family relations. But with us, we have come to see the Father and Jesus and men in cooperative relations. And the work of Jesus in saving us becomes the same as the work of anyone of the whole group. After all, maybe the best exegesis of these verses is to throw them down again into the mind of the Jews, or the Jewish mind of Jesus, back into the thought flux, and restate the relation between the Father, Jesus and men in new thought forms as suggested above.

In that way we could avoid the clash in thought and at the same time make way for a volitional love activity on the part of all together. The sum total of thought, teaching and activity of Jesus calls for such a restatement of God the Father the eternal source of all and our volitional activity which is fashioned as his and harmoniously active in the same way and time as his.

Let us examine the Bible records a little with this in mind. Let us compare Matthew 20:20-28 and Mark 10:35-45 with this paragraph and also the preceding twenty-four verses of the chapter. These verses tell of John the Baptist rejected and in prison and also of the heart break of Jesus over the whole general situation. Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum where he

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had done his great works and ministry, had rejected him. Yet in spite of his failure, he felt he had the only hope and salvation. And out of his intimate fellowship with the Father, his strong personality asserts itself as master of the situation and having the only yoke of life that is truly the nature of life. So he meets their rebellion and rejection with the usual gracious invitation to come and live true.—This is not a defeated will and personality.

But what is this yoke, and how is this primacy of will? Turn to the record in Matthew 20 and Mark 10. Here we have this relation of wills and form of their activity properly set forth. In this paragraph, original with Mark, we see the autocratic form of commanding and obeying set aside for the form of co-operative service. The ambition to rule and rise to the first place so that no one can come to the Father except that those holding that position should will it is condemned. "It shall not be so among you." But first place you may have.

People may come to the Father by you and you alone if you wish. But the yoke of it is the law of humble service to meet human needs. In that you find supremacy of personality and will—which is not supremacy at all according to the old order and according to the one verse of Matthew 11:27 and the Hebrew thought of Paul, Augustine, Calvin and Arminius. Seeing Jesus the minister of all and at the same time supreme among all makes way for the life of love. As

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it is a new order of will relations of Jesus, the Father and men, so it is an enlarged will power. How do we hold or conceive this personality thus bringing people to the Father? Does not our conception and the Hebrew conception of personality need restatement?

### (b) THE PERSONALITY.

From the beginning those who have thought through the question of personality to a conclusion, have been divided into materialists and spiritualists. However they go they arrive at either one or the other of these two camps.

For the present materialistic thinking, a good statement is that of Th. Ribot quoted by Park and Burgess' *Introduction to the Science of Sociology* (p. 108). He says: "The organism and the brain, as its highest representation, constitutes the real personality, containing in itself all that we have been, and the possibility of all that we shall be. The complete individual character is inscribed there with all its active and passive aptitudes, sympathies and antipathies; its genius, talents or stupidities; its virtues, vices, torpor, or activity. Of all these, what emerges and actually reaches consciousness is only a small item compared with what remains buried below, albeit still active. Conscious personality is always but a feeble portion of physical personality.

"The unity of the ego, consequently, is not that of the one entity of spiritualists which is dispersed into multiple phenomena, but the coordination of a cer-

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tain number of incessantly renascent states, having for their support the vague sense of our bodies. This unity does not pass from above to below, but from below to above; the unity of the ego is not an initial, but a terminal point." And again, "The genesis of these organisms and the solidarity of their component parts, biology, if it can, should explain."

For as clear a statement of present thinking of the spiritualists, V. M. Bekhterev, (p. 123 *ibid*), may be quoted: This man says, "In my opinion personality is not merely a unifying and directing principle which controls thought and action, but one which, at the same time defines the relations of individuals to their fellows. The concept of personality includes, in addition to inner unity and coordination of the impulses, a definite attitude directed toward the outer world which is determined by the manner in which the individual organizes his external stimulations." Again, "The mental life manifests itself invariably in a definite series of objective expressions. Only these are accessible to external observation and they alone have objective value." And also, "Personality is the basis on which all social instincts, movements, conditions, in short all the phenomena of the social life, rest." "The personality is self-determining, not subjected."

These, in brief, are the two conceptions and the only two. We simply pay our money and take our choice. They are alike in that the description of the visible organism or objective expression is the same.

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In the first case, however, the personality is the physical organism or brain or objective value. While in the second, this is simply the manifestation of an inner, subjective and self-directing spiritual personality. In the first case, the origin and solidarity should be explained by biology,—if it can—.

While in the second case, the origin of objective reality described is declared to be the inner spirit, the free personality. In the first case, the personality and the physical manifestations are declared to be identical. A thing which begins to give us an explanation only to be cut short by the need of seeking out its origin in a biological way. This is not done and confessedly cannot be done as yet. But as it is we have nothing but materialism. While in the second place, the physical organism remains such and is declared to be the manifestation of an active principle, an inner spirit, the real personality. This being spirit is not demonstrably proved or tested by the senses. It is simply postulated from the objective realities. There the mind rests. There, too, we begin.

A living soul, a personal will as the center and origin of life both individual and social, and a great personal will at the center of the universe—this is the choice we make. This is the course we take. With this there is not only much assurance and comfort but also a sure basis for our scientific investigation and description of society. Unity, conscious purpose and dynamic causality find their proper place in human experience. So-

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cial relations hang together and the higher, finer, psychic and moral life finds its free realization in a material world of its own ordering, not dissipated or bound down to it.

So much for the fact of personality and its place. Now more of its nature. In the past, personality has been thought of and defined in individualistic terms. And of course the relation followed naturally of great ones dominating weaker ones. This once done with regard to men, the conception gained was also made to shadow forth the divine personality. Odd contradictions arose, requiring long explanations. Three distinct manifestations appeared in divine-human relations. The divine personality was one in three—with explanations. Observation of a three-fold activity required a trinity of personality. Yet unity or singleness was an absolute demand. This found words to give it expression. Whatever number or divisibility came forth must be described in relation to the center reality, as a corollary to it. The original conception held firm. The mind hesitated, blocked and confused. To let go unity meant chaos. To describe that element of personality not individual was just as confusing.

Therefore dismiss it with an "ipse dixit" and trust to one's consciousness that it must be so. That is in fact what the historic explanations of the Trinity have been, a demand or postulate of our being rather than a true rational understanding of the problem. Life



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was larger than reasoning as to personality, especially the divine personality. So we taught it and believed it with our intellectual eyes closed. Men chose between this personal postulate without reason and formal reasoning with little or no personal postulate. When forced upon me in this way, I, too, choose for myself the first.

Now when that situation prevailed there was much formal authority as such and very much more individualism. It was easy and quite universal to conform in this way. But today individualism and formal authority stand forth in their true light. Social relations, in place of being an afterthought of individual persons, are seen to be coordinate with individual things and have a chief place in determining personality. This temporal social personality, now being searched out in great detail and set in order, demands a spirit to animate it. The old individualistic conception of that spirit does not suffice.

As a result many are working out a fine social system with no heart or life. Some are trying to declare an intellectual control. While others are postulating a separate social personality or social mind so-called. To identify the person with matter is just as crude and revolting as ever to these people. Yet how to think out the new problem is slow to appear. However, it is clear we cannot set forth the true nature of personality without coming to a solution of this.

Suppose we blaze a new trail. In the realm of ac-

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tivity and reality, with real persons and real human activities as facts to work with, let us see this personal will and attempt to define it. The only way men have known and defined personality in the past is to observe and record how it acts and then from this conclude its inner nature. This they did with the things they found as facts. This we can do with what we find as facts.

Two persons, whatever their nature, get married. What have they done in the blindness of their love? The fact observed in the past was that one individual went searching for the other, found her and took her. The other one, never for a moment searching but greatly surprised to discover that she was being sought, made herself hard to find and consented with great show of unwillingness to be taken. Individualism par excellence.

The family ties of the "in-laws," mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, cousins, uncles, aunts, were next to be dealt with. These, one at a time, formally declared their acceptance or rejection of the new reality. As though it were all an entirely new situation, never before having entered their individualistic minds. Very seldom was there complete harmony in these social relations. It was not gone about in such a way as to produce it. But whatever the reality, the description is in individualistic terms.

Then began a new home life on the individualistic basis. Unity of command must be maintained. Therefore one will was "it." The other must be subordi-

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nate. This was once a reality if it is not so now. So the description persists. The children in the home fell in line under the same relations. No other way to observe the persons and maintain unity. In practice and reality even now, we reason about this authority and obedience in the home. From all which we conclude as to the nature of the inner spirits we call persons. Those realities going about in time and space conditions in this way must be so and so.

Personality must be by nature thus and so. And strange to say, every element we appear to find, or attribute, in spite of the fact that we are dealing with social phenomena and many persons, is individualistic. In the same way we go through the whole realm of activity, finally announcing this is the personal will. Then on from this to conceive the divine will. And those conclusions have been pitifully negligent or confusing as to social activity. A fact of large importance has been completely overlooked.

But there is another way. Let us observe these social actions more carefully. Two persons, whatever their natures, get married. What have they done in the blindness of their love? The fact observed now, since social thinking has come forward, is that a mutual choice and willing pledge in life together has come to pass. Two people mate in love. They have not stood off as individuals and considered each other and then approached and claimed each other. They have lived themselves into a oneness. Indeed, they have not

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stopped to reason it out or test it out or prove it. Indeed, it was "love at first sight." They do not know how it came about. All at once and little by little they observed and realized their wills are one, a cooperative activity. Neither one had been complete in activity without the other. They had grown into a social relation that was perfectly natural. They were born for each other. To define the nature of each one without including this social factor was to leave out half of the description and explanation, and that the better half.

It is time we passed up marriage as an agreement between two persons. It is two persons. They are alive *together* and not strange to say, they live together. This social living is the will activity of each one. If one dies the other is half dead. This is a vital fact of life, an attribute of an inner soul. It is the activity of the personality in each case. I may dream alone or I may dream with my wife. I may hope alone or I may hope with my wife. I may think or act alone or I may think and act with my wife. But whether alone or with my wife, in every case it is I who am active. Men and women do not have social relations. They *are* social relations. In fact the social activity of persons is far greater than the individual activity. They do not exist without this social activity. When it is observed properly and meditated on explaining and seeking its cause in spirit, we conclude there is a social element in the nature of personality. It is not

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“give attention to your social duties,” as though they could be neglected and you as a person will go on, your main life unhurt.

Social living is not something to be put on and taken off. It is real life. It is a part of the vital organs of life. When I am defining a personality as a thinking, feeling, acting being, I have come to that conclusion by observing it in social activity even more than in individual activity. I cannot get a true concept of it without doing so. When we have become accustomed to acquainting ourselves with persons in this way we will know each other better.

Why should the mother complain at her son-in-law or the father drive him away? Has not the daughter lived herself into his life? If there is a real social life bond, all that is foolish. Each one who lives into the clan life and becomes a vital part of it can do no more. His personality is in all these normal family relations. It is identified as much with them as the smile on his face. We talk of personal liberties as the freedom to wear the expression we please or to eat what we please. That may be individualistic. But it is not personal liberty any more than the freedom to pay one's taxes or attend church or join the army in defence of a common security of life and property.

Eating onions at any time, I am here to tell you, is absolutely fatal to the nose on one's face and more than inconvenient socially. My personal will opens and closes my hand. It also in the same way extends its

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power to the copper wire and electric currents, and on the other side of the world opens and closes. One is a little nearer than the other from a certain point of view. I may smash the temple of a man with my fist or a long pole or a bullet, or a word to another man far distant. In describing the act there may be many differences of detail. But all equally determine a personality murderous and wicked. We need no social personality to watch an individual personality. We need one person, individual and social.

I want to know and define God. I search out his activity or I see an activity that is more than human. I look at the flower and rock. I look at the way He comes direct to the hearts of men. I see how He came in new, enlarged and unusual activity in the life of one man Jesus and how that man comes with unique power to all men since. I see Him on this account nearer, as one in the midst of us all and like us in personality and activity. I see how democratic and brotherly He is, how He relates himself to men, as one of them, saving but not ruling them "as the Gentiles." He is all grace and trust. From all these manifestations and activities, I form my conception of his character. They are his personality active in these various ways. I do not need to give Him two or three or many personalities for these various manifestations or activities and then combine them into one. Not at all. Those all enter into the conception of the one personality. Part of his activity was to come into human flesh and blood and



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live a man, on earth, that I might know Him better and be blessed by Him. He was doing many other things at the same time.

My life is an image of his and I may do many things. As my activity is like his I am living and growing into a like personality with him and may be worthy of his fellowship. In every case, whether we think of human personality or divine, we observe the sum total of activity and from that postulate the nature of the spiritual reality so acting. The postulates of the past have been made with too little regard for social phenomena. Whereupon something further had to be thought to explain all. Rather than that, let us give personality its true, large proportions.

Further illustration of this social element in personality may be seen in such confessions as that of Mr. Andrew Carnegie that he had gained his great fortune chiefly by the wise enlistment and use of other men's talents. He had so fastened men to his chief ambition of wealth getting that their talents worked to that end. This gathering men about one's self, even in this selfish way, so that the activity of all fuses into one is utterly impossible without a social element in personality. Indeed all organized activity is this element more or less developed. Government is a relation or cohesive activity of wills. And it is a fascinating thing to search this out and describe it. If these are strong, well developed and properly and

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naturally related, the government is strong. If not, it is weak.

If the great mass of personalities are neglected and in subjection; denied their well-rounded activity in these social relations, and allowed freedom of action only in a little circle of petty individualistic things—that government or state is weak. No army can save it. No few, specially trained in social relations, can make up for the lack in all the rest. Indeed, that few of necessity are wrongly developed socially. They have in fact little genuine social life or none at all. They are selfish overgrown individualists.

Another fact to be noted is that personality grows. It has its evolution as all reality. It is not born full orb'd. It is a larger thing in adult life than in infancy. It is not all there in germ to start with. With some of us or all of us it never gets all there. The divine personality, even, is larger today than in the eons before the world began. This may seem strange to some. For both the human and divine personality have always been thought of as static. So it is necessary to call attention to this fact. There is not in a child an adult personality, imprisoned and held back by a little mass of flesh weak and unformed. No living thing is that way.

The soul at first is small and germinal as well as the body. And as it grows it fashions itself into a physical world. Indeed the soul alone evolves. The visible body and world are the form of that evolution. True

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analysis of the activity of people will force this element of growth into the postulate of all personality. The society of men and God is a cooperative activity from the first. Why the scientist, who has been completely enamored of evolution, has not seen this I do not know. When he does see it, he will have that much less occasion to get on without the spirit in the physical world. Another barrier will have been removed.

Having now these three elements in our conception of personality, individual, social, developmental, there is left another matter, the conditioning power of material things. Environment is material as well as spiritual. And there is danger of thinking the inner soul evolution is the result of external physical stimuli: the soul is passively responding both as to growth and action. This is no small error. Hundreds there be that think this way. But this puts causality in the wrong way. True enough we do not know of the existence of the person or his activity except in connection with material things and material stimuli. They are always present, but not on that account with causal power. There is no dynamics in them; that is, in the person whose activity takes that material form. But being free and original in this power to act, does not mean that action is wild and disorderly. Some conceptions of freedom are that of a school boy three seconds after the last gong sounds.

Personal freedom does not ride rough shod over physical things in complete disregard of them. It re-

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members such things are the form of other persons' activity. And so it lives into them. Its activity is an orderly, creative, growing into time and space objective reality. That is its field of life, social and physical; as the air is the realm of the bird's life. The bird is master of itself, flying whither it would. A part of the art of which is consideration of wind currents. That is its experience, to be described, as human experience. The atmosphere has no dynamic power to cause by a million stimuli the bird to fly. Causality is wrongly thought of in that way. That makes it blind, mechanical, predetermined and physical. Nor is causality wild caprice, but orderly, purposive, free activity of a person. A person who is happy in his proper, orderly, relations, glad to be here, perfectly at home in his own world order and visible world reality.

With this as a ground work, let us now see what it means in moral values and social relations. Personal responsibility is reaching out farther and farther till we see it has no limit. When King Edward went home after the coronation ceremonies, he touched a spring that set in motion the machinery which slowly put in place the great corner stone of a hospital building which Dr. Grenfel hundreds of miles away was dedicating to the service and healing of the Labrador people. President Wilson pressed a button that set off the last charge of dynamite that blew out the last piece of rock separating the Atlantic from the Pacific in the Panama Canal. A man talks to a phonograph,

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and his voice is heard around the world. Or he stands before ten thousand people and the person most distant hears as distinctly as the one sitting at his feet. Even more, people in other cities at the same moment may hear his voice and look into his eyes at the same time.

For some time we have had the swift flight of the airplane. For a long time we have had the telegraphic message and the faster means of travel on land. Five centuries now number our round-the-world journeys. While writing and printing have to their credit many more centuries. Articulate speech has still more. All destroys isolation of people. Who can tell the reach and power of personal responsibility? Who can stand aside isolated and unrelated to his fellow-beings? Would not such a person be non-existent and unthinkable? In a multitude of ways we are bound to our fellow beings and they bound to us. Who can say, "It is none of my affairs?" "I am a disinterested observer?" That means suicide.

A bill was introduced in Congress the other day proposing a fine of ten thousand dollars upon any county within whose bounds a mob and lynching occurs. God hasten its becoming a law. For it only gives definition to the social element of every person in the county. Persons are criminal socially as well as individually. The December, 1913, *S. S. Journal and Bible Students Magazine* tells the story of a young man in Cincinnati. He was born there, educated there,

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and environed by the best social and commercial life. Receiving teller in one of the large banks, he robbed it of \$31,000. Surely an individual crime if ever there was one. But was it any more individual than social?

At the same time two of the highest officials of that bank, under oath, testified before a legislative committee that their bank had been participating for years in the county treasury graft. A half a score or more of the leading bankers of the city admitted that they had been facilitating graft, and one even attempted to justify it on the ground that business conditions required it. And all of them together united successfully in stopping the unwelcome disclosures of the committee. The individual crime was only half the personal crime of the young man. He was willingly a part of a mass of criminal social ties. The bankers of the city and all persons connected with them, in fact all the citizens of the city and the county for that matter, (for conservative estimates place the amount of public graft at 25 % of the funds) are personally responsible and personally active in graft, crime and robbery. They fool themselves into thinking they can live their own personal individual lives honestly, alone and separated from social duties. These social acts they take up and lay down as a sort of accessory to life, and not necessarily a part of that life. But there is not that distinction in personality. It is a unit, active in social and individual ways.

In a Kentucky village, says John Uri Lloyd in *Les-*



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*lie's Monthly*, two neighbors lived, the best of friends in a way. One evening, one called on the other. He kissed the children and shook hands with their parents as he said, "I may not see you again. Tonight I go to join Morgan." Whereupon the host went to his little wardrobe, took therefrom his great coat, thrust a pistol into the pocket, and threw it over the arm of his guest. The good neighbor attempted to return it. "No," said the donor, "You take this coat. Your path is to be one of privation; besides, I won't need it. Tomorrow I start north to enlist. My government has overcoats to spare and pistols too; you who go South may find neither. God bless you friend; may we return to meet again."

They were friends as individuals but mortal enemies socially. A social institution of which they were a part made enemies of them. Each person had grown out into the slave and master status of society, in opposite relations to be sure, but personal relations vital as any part of their personal activity. They never had been compelled to take stock of themselves before. They had thoughts and sentiments that now crystallized into personal social action which made them personal enemies. They fooled themselves for a long time. But finally the real values came forth.

In the early days of the development of our free public schools it was hard to secure financial foundation. So much so that they resorted to the lottery. And we had, therefore, honest teachers and honest

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scholars nourished and supported in their search for truth and efforts at character building by a social gambling activity. This was another attempt to separate life into a social mind and an individual mind. The latter was to be developed pure and high regardless of the former. Well it is that this contradiction was removed.

Again. It was the fashion years ago to finish one's education in Germany. Indeed no one was truly and completely educated without this. Yet with regard to American students, if not the students of all the democratic nations, there was a twist in the thing. They could not quite accommodate themselves to the Imperial German Government and its relations to schools and thinking. On the surface it seemed that fine intellectual attainment could go on side by side with a false and antiquated practical politics. Benefit by the intellectual activity. Have nothing to do with the government. Pick out what you want, train the mind and come back to lead in education. This was individualism par-excellence. And now we wonder if we would not be farther along in the educational problem if we had never seen Germany of the past three-quarters of a century. For the individualistic, knowledge-getting conception of education is no more. The intellectual attainments were empty and false, as the government which vied with them and made them possible. So that no one can take the one and leave the other. Truth is suspicious of both.

There is nothing impersonal about science and phil-

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osophy. Personality mixes in them the same as in religion. It goes everywhere. It is a pretty severe lesson the world has had in an attempt to departmentalize life. Another will surely prove fatal. Faculty psychology, and my nation separate from the world or against it, or dominating it need to be shipped overboard together. There are no limits to personality in its social activity. No man lives to himself. And there is no part of life separate from the rest, not even in the world to come. The sinners will never be where they will not touch the heart of Jesus and his followers and move them to works of mercy and help. All things, everywhere, material, human and divine are the field of personality. This is a truth for the economic world and its order as for all the rest of the world.

Now Jesus had lived his life with the Father into the social bonds of human life, freeing it from bonds or relations unnatural and cruel. No one had yet done this. Some had thought it. But none had lived it. Such is his salvation. O, the power of personality to do it and to help others to do it. He feels that this achievement cannot be destroyed and set aside: that it is a part of the Father as it is of the Son: that it is the door opening for all to the Father. This is what we discover his activity to be and personality back of it to be also. This we declare is the essence of the scripture record.

In all probability, Jesus declared it so but was at

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once misinterpreted by the Jews into their own autocratic thinking. In spite of themselves, drawn as they were into mysterious personal fellowship with him, their thought failed to tell rightly of that fellowship. Or Jesus may have put it into their language so they could have understood a little of his personal primacy. Or he may have been able only to think in such forms himself, having grown in them himself, his mind being Jewish. Of these three, the first seems to me the most reasonable. For thinkers who try to explain reality, seldom experience the thing they describe and must do it in forms established. Therefore the new life suffers and is cramped into old forms. Jesus was not describing. He was living the new, abundant life and getting men to live it. And this reality is what we want to get at. It must have been such as to harmonize with the sum total of his earthly life, the centuries of transformed human life since, and the present and future realization of it. No Bible writer or Jewish thinker can hold it cramped down into something else. When Jesus wills to reveal the Father to us, he does not choose some and reject others, he simply works a loving service in our midst and as one of us. That is his will and the will of the Father, his personality, the Father's and ours in the world family.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### The Crucifixion of Jesus

#### (a) THE RECORDS AND THEIR THEORY.

THE materials for our consideration in this chapter are to be found in Matthew 14:27. Chapters 24 and 25, together with the parables found in this section, have been dealt with in other chapters of this book. So also many of the special instructions to his disciples have received treatment. This leaves the events of Passion Week in chaps. 26 and 27, the awful denunciation of the Pharisees in chaps. 21-23, and the three disclosures of himself as the suffering Servant of Jehovah found in chaps. 16-20 as the particular material setting forth the last days of Jesus. In this record we have the background and setting of the stage for the greatest tragedy in history. What do we find?

First of all, there is the singling out of the Pharisees as the religious leaders more responsible than any one else for the crucifixion of Jesus. The patience of Jesus is exhausted. He has met all their questions and arguments and silenced them. They hold back only because of the people. But they have not surrendered. Their evil purpose is fixed. He cannot escape them. Their real wickedness of life and their formal, empty

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service is beyond question. And against them is poured forth such an invective as the world has never heard before. For sharp thrusts, keen warfare in hard words and illuminating metaphors, it goes unmatched forever. Jesus knew who would be responsible more than all others for his death, and who are always responsible for the death of God's prophets. So he hit hard. There should be no doubt on this point in after years. That is settled.

The next thing evident in this record is the author's firm conviction that the whole drama is the fulfilment of the Old Testament ideal of the suffering Servant of Jehovah. People are so far gone in evil ways that one must save them, and he must save them by suffering. In some way Jehovah's Servant will bear the sins of all as a lamb on the sacrificial altar. This awful task is what crushes him in Gethsemane. It is all simply true to such idealistic conceptions as are found in the writings of the ancient Hebrew prophets. For instance (Isaiah 53). Jesus is the realization of these writings. And he declares as much to his disciples, according to the author,—chaps. 16-20. "Who do men say that I am?" is the question to Peter. Answer, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things. That is his cross and the cross of all who follow him. This is repeated in direct statements and in the incident of the temple tax and the half-shekel. Then a third time in teaching the disciples, chap. 19:20, 28. But in every



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case the experience which is to come to him as the Suffering Servant of Jehovah is put to the disciples in such a way as to teach them that they are to go through a similar one. It is not to be unique with him, else he would not say, "take up your cross and follow Me" or "My cup indeed you shall drink."

From this fact, I cannot see how the theologians of the past can hold to the mysterious and unique suffering of Jesus. If so, how can he call us to follow and suffer with him? They do not get it out of the record. It is there indeed in the Hebrew ideal. The author aims to teach it. But in doing so, he interweaves it, unwittingly, with particular incidents and teachings of Jesus which contradict the very thing aimed at and make the death of Jesus of the same spiritual power, and nature as that of Isaiah or Lincoln. In spite of his supreme aim to set forth Jesus as the Messiah of Hebrew idealism, especially in death and resurrection, he has given us the key to the true conception of the tragedy at the end of the life of Jesus.

All we need to do is to drop the preconceived notion of the author and take a new view of the events of those days. Let us look at them ourselves, with our best judgment and without the Messianic prejudice and see what we conclude. Maybe after all, the whole tragedy will appear not as Matthew states, a necessary, inevitable and purposed crucifixion of the Christians' divine prophet for human sin such as is claimed by the other religions in their traditions, but as the usual ex-

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treme and contemptuous punishment of a lowly one who in fact and on behalf of the truth is forced to be an open traitor and heretic; as the seal to all his teaching and action, removing all doubt as to sincerity and devotion, showing by this steadfastness in death his true love of men and unwavering trust of the Father. Maybe this is the drawing, saving power for all the world, this moral and spiritual struggle in his soul in the moment of death. We seeing it, look and live in our moment of moral and spiritual struggle. Maybe, too, we will discover the real, living, moral and spiritual connection between the Old Testament prophets, Jesus and all prophets.

### (b) MURDEROUS HUMANITY.

God is understandable. And God in Jesus saving the world by grace at the supreme moment of his mission is understandable. Do you get that? If so, the examination of the events of that moment will proceed happily. The persons and their relations will all come forth naturally. Here are the Pharisees already mentioned with their captious questions, their deception and open hatred, plotting and planning for his death. Again and again their actions reveal that deadly hatred present only in men who are wicked and rebuked, and who seek revenge. Not all are filled up with this wickedness. But as a class they are and the wicked ones have matters in their hands. Religious bigotry goes to its limit in the death of its victim.

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Next to these are the civil rulers, Pilate as their representative. Before our minds come the whole Roman Empire and its system of government. Jesus had condemned it. Pilate cared not for that, though he was always on guard for insurrection leaders. Yet this man troubled him but little. The favor of the people and the security of his rule were dear to him. So he administers justice with that in view. That is, he gives corrupt justice. A careful reading of the trial before Pilate indicates that while there is a show of formalities there is a brazen disregard of justice. "I find no fault in him." "Take him and crucify him,"—is that justice? And not only so with Jesus, it was so with Paul. Justice was the might of the Romans and had a money value. Nothing but corrupt justice can be found in the trial of Jesus. This, too, with the Sanhedrin. For it ruled at the mercy of the Romans.

But this injustice always works by graft and military force. It takes money at certain times. The Pharisees furnished it in the bribed witnesses and the price of Judas. The whole machinery of injustice stops if there is no money. It turns, too, only when material force turns it. Jesus could not have been crucified without the soldiers. The military forces are necessary to injustice. Militarism is not the way of Jesus. He had said so. There was an eternal conflict between them. One or the other must die. That one is Jesus.

Besides these things, the mob spirit had no small part. The action by crowds or the giving over of

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personal responsibility to the crowd. This relieves one of the necessity of judgment and will. It is a social sin of no small consequence. The crowd called out "Hosannas." It also said, "Crucify him." And that mob helped to do him to death. It had the will to do.

And not the least evil manifest here is class contempt. The artificial division of people into classes. Social and financial strata. The cross was reserved for the death of a slave. Rebels of the Roman Empire were such in status. In supreme contempt they crucify him. They compel him to bear his cross. Rulers and people and all are united in this cruel decree.

These are the six social sins revealed in the actions of those who crucify Jesus. They have always been present in society and they do a lot of evil. Suffering always arises when they show themselves. They are perfectly understandable. They come forth plainly in the record left us. Careful reading makes them the great forces of the crucifixion. I claim no credit for calling attention to them. That belongs to Rauschenbusch in his *Theology For a Social Gospel*. I simply name them here as the human sins that pierced the heart of Jesus. These things crushed him to death as they have many a good man. What now is the attitude, the conduct of Jesus toward them? How does he receive humanity's sins? How does he approach this shameful death? Herein must be found the real personality of Jesus and its power to save.

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Read again the whole record and we find Jesus acting in harmony with his teachings. There is no hate of those who torture him. There is just soul resistance and words sufficient to make it evident to all. Then there is wonderful calm and faith with words and acts sufficient to make that sure to all. So let us keep out of the realm of abstractions and in the realm of personal relations in act and attitude to discover the meaning of the cross. Recall and hold in mind while we reason, such sayings of Jesus as the following:

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." "I and the Father are one." "The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." "I am the light of the world." "I am the bread of life." "I am the good shepherd." "I am the way, the truth and the life." "Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice." "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." "Whosoever would save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it." "Whosoever would be first among you, shall be servant of all." With these in mind as well as the "chastisement of our peace is upon him," "By his stripes we are healed," let us look at Jesus during those wonderful days. Let us ask, what expression of this central mission do we find in his Geth-

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semane experience? What revelation of the Father? And how is it related to our religious life? How does it save us?

Jesus has the one great purpose to do the will of the Father. This is the first aim of his life. And this should be the first thing looked for in this supreme expressive act. If Jesus desired anything at all, it was to go about teaching this and performing acts that would make it real among men, even to the ends of the earth. He desired to persuade men by his actions, exhortations and prayers to live this holy life. Thus he would save them. Any interference with this desire must have been the deepest agony to him. In three short years of his public ministry he had only begun that work. The little company that was nearest to him in fellowship, he felt, had only partially realized it in their lives. Surely he desired with all his soul to continue his ministry at least till they understood him and lived his life, if not till all men had at least heard of him. He wanted to live on in this world. Life here was sweet to him, sweeter far than anything else; he loved it more than anyone had ever loved to live. It was the dearest thing in all the world, this loving answer to the pitiable cry of need on every hand. The nations yet untouched were crying to him for help. Misery on every hand; ignorance and sin, reached out to him for help, hope, life and faith. He alone could answer it. To whom would they go if he failed them? He alone had the words of eternal life. It was life,



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sweet life to speak those words. How he loved to serve men and reveal to them the truth and the way to the Father.

All night he prayed. All day long he worked. It was his food and drink. From a boy the purpose was with him. During those three years it increased its power over him. As he went to Gethsemane it mastered him. As he went on alone a little farther that dark night and prayed a third time, this passionate desire was, "O, that I might have a thousand years. Is it all over in these three short years? Not half my appointed years of life. Work just begun, is it all over? No place for me when I was born. No synagogue open to me. No temple where I may pray. No people whom I may teach. No time for me to do my work.

"The last hour has come. Good-bye to my mother and brethren—that is naught. These disciples so willing yet untaught. This people so faithless. This mob so filled with hate and murder. This world so far from the Father's love. Is it possible? Is it possible? Are these blind leaders of the blind to have their way? Prison and death for me? Must I let go this ministry to my brethren? Have I gripped the hearts of men for all time so they will not slip from me? In this short time? Father, do I hold the world? Have I done enough? Can the blind eyes of these men heavy with sleep see Thee? Father, isn't it too soon to leave them? Having exhorted them to faith in the Kingdom when it is but the grain of mustard seed, that they

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should see from afar the full grown tree, must I myself stand on that alone? Such a great mission, Father, Thou hast given me. Is the seed sown? So great is the enemy; so terrible the sins of men, heavenly Father, hast Thou brought it to naught, even now? If possible, let it not be so. Yet not my will but Thine be done. I trust Thee. I believe Thee.

“Work gone. Friends gone. Yet every step of the way, I have obeyed Thee and trusted. I do so now. This alone is left me, faith in Thee. Why is it all so? Why stand I thus alone? Why do wicked men plot my death, coming even now to take me? Is it that I might stand stripped of all but trust and obedience in Thee? Is faith and trust in the Fatherly goodness in this tragic end the greatest saving act that it is possible for me to do? Even so. It is not for naught if thereby I can lead men to the same unshaken faith and obedience. Every sin in hate and murder I have faced, am facing even murder itself. Yet I am secure in Thee. I have conquered all. Need anyone stagger and fall under the load? I have borne it all. Let them come follow me. I will sustain them. Secure in Thee; trusting, doing thy will at this awful hour, is my comfort and stay. Into thy hands I commit it all, even life itself. It is enough. If no more journeyings and teachings, this security in death is more than all. No more good deeds and holy emotions. This is enough. Men now have the way of escape from sin. It is enough. Thy will is best.

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"I will live through death this life of spirit and truth. They cannot touch this. No destruction or death for this. Nor can men limit its power. This will save men. It saves me. This is the lesson men need to learn. I will teach them. This is what men need to realize in their lives. I will make it real in my life. It is of the eternities. I will no longer complain or hesitate. Thy will be done. I understand. I am at peace. My will with Thy will. I conquer all earthly experiences. No discord comes into the fellowship of our spirits. We are one. And men will look and live. In me is their salvation, in rising to live the supreme life of faith and trust which I now live in word and deed before their eyes. It is enough. 'Sleep on now and take your rest. Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Arise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that betrayeth me.' "

It was a real personal experience between two persons first, then all others. The old conflict of truth against error, filial love against murderous hate. Not peace but a sword, thrust in to the hilt. All his life long the forces of evil had been gathering. He saw it and often referred to it. This was the climax. He met them and overcame them. They took from him physical life, while he threw himself over on the truth, eternal spiritual realities and God the Father. Such is the victorious end of the battle always. Go about

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teaching the truth. Exhort men to live it. Enforce it with loving, helpful deeds.

Serve men. Rebuke the evil. Be uncompromising toward it. Return good for evil. Be strong in faith and prayer. And the last act and word and motion of the spirit will be love, trust and obedience; living on victorious in death, fixed not in the good pleasure of God and men, but determined and executed by evil and murderous men. This is the final appeal of a true, good person as evil men arise to do him to death. This is the vital force, personal and indestructable, the light of the world and the eternal inspiration of men. Small beginnings, wonderful enlarged endings, laying hold of the hearts of men and holding on forever.

This was Jesus. He taught and worked good works among men. From the manger to the cross, the evil forces disputed every step of the way. He simply announced his ministry in the home synagogue at Nazareth, and it forever shut its doors against him. He preached to the people. Having compassion on the multitudes, he healed them and fed them. Immediately, the priests and rulers were jealous and sought how they might ensnare him. Withdrawing from the public, he gathered a few about him and taught them his "hard sayings."

The evil forces grew bolder, and plied him with cunningly devised questions. He exposed their hypocrisy, took up the cause of the poor and outcast, got close to the hearts of his disciples, humbled him-

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self to the utmost till the stones of the street cried out in his defence. Then all hell arose within them. They gnashed their teeth. They stirred up the mob. They set going the Roman legions. They bribed men. They got the vote of the Sanhedrin. They tried him unheard. They scoffed, mocked, insulted, crucified him. Not a devilish means of a devilish warfare was left unused. Every form of evil known to the sinful, hating hearts of men was brought to bear on him and did him to death. He had not a human power for his defence. Every human tie was cut. No one stood for him. He died alone. On the cross, his bitter cry was, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" At the last he was crowded completely from the stage of human life. Only a few women wept for him, not understanding it all. Only an object of charity for burial. He was absolutely compelled to make the last appeal to the truth and the Father's love. And there he rested his life and his work of saving the world, confident and assured that he had not failed: forsaken yet victorious.

He had been tempted in all points more deeply than all, yet he did not yield. No human being need fear, therefore, any temptation. He had met every form of hateful and devilish opposition and triumphed over it, even an unjust death. No person would ever be called upon to face worse opposition. Therefore they need not faint. Jesus has conquered the worst. When the battle is on, let men run to him for succor. He has born the burden of it all and in the only right way.

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Let them take his way, put on his yoke. It will be easy and light. When the enemy would attack them, let them in defence point to him, appeal to him, follow in his steps; in death, live in spirit and truth, committing all to the Father, and they are saved—saved for the eternities. The burden of sin is gone. In the presence of Jesus in Gethsemane, let all men be ashamed of their sins. Let them now and forever be victors with Jesus over all evil, over all temptation.

Thus Jesus saves us from sin, by living it out of existence. Defeat and death thrust upon him by sinful men is met and overcome by a complete disregard of it in a spiritual life above and beyond it, secure in fellowship with the Father. Thus our sins are upon him. Thus by the stripes applied to him, we are healed. Verily, we escape being struck. Thus the sins of the whole world, of all time are done away with. Sin is an awful deadly disease of the soul, a self-imposed disease. Its cure and destruction are possible only in the same way that disease of the body is cured, namely, making conditions such and giving power so that life in its natural processes may gather itself up and grow.

Then health comes. So comes spiritual health. Thus salvation in the spiritual life is as much and as real before the disease of sin has laid hold on one as after it has gone far in destroying the life. It is exactly the same, too, in each case. It is purely a matter of making way for life. The Saviour must come with life. His work of saving is a work of living, of gener-



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ating life. It does not beat back the waves of sin. He puts one's feet on the solid rock, high above the surging waves. It is a positive matter. It looks to the future. It does not crush down sin, or struggle, lifting it up and rolling it off one's back. It lives and grows, and sin drops away impotent and dead. That is salvation—the salvation of Jesus in Gethsemane and on the cross.

Two things stand out with remarkable clearness in the accounts of this experience of Jesus. One is the Father, Jesus' prayer with the Father and his living up into the will of the Father. The other is, "he that betrayeth me," "the hands of sinners," those who had opposed him all along, and now were about to complete their infamous work. He knew they would give the one last chance to yield before the Sanhedrin, forsake his teaching and mission, and do their bidding; being rewarded with a seat of honor equal to their own. The break must be complete with the one or the other. On the one hand was the Father; on the other hand, these men and their institutions. It was a real choice between the two, the final choice, the climax of a continual living choice. In that choice is the tragedy and the salvation for all the world.

Jesus' strange hesitation at this hour was the same as that which occurs with all moral and spiritual choice in the real conflict of right against wrong. Every man hesitates as he personally allies himself with one or the other. It is the most tragic moment in any life. All

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should hesitate and go slowly, carefully, safely, prayerfully. It is the supreme moment of life, the time of our salvation and of our saving our fellow men.

This is the setting of the stage of those last days of Jesus. Three characters, Jesus, the Father, sinful men. How foolish for us, how dare we attempt an explanation of it all from the viewpoint of sinful men alone. We cannot do so. We must consider all, and life with the Father most of all. So often we exhort men to be true to God, to live with Jesus, and to have the same filial attitude toward the Father that he had. Right here in Gethsemane is where we may make moral and living connection with Jesus; where we may be saved with him; becoming heirs with him. So, too, we may become co-workers with him in saving our brethren. Put into the same experience if we are true as he was, we shall inspire others and save them from yielding to temptation. With Jesus, we will be the way, the truth, the life for men.

When we see Jesus in these active personal relations, these moral struggles, our attention is called not to qualities but to relations of men and actions. We desire to be like him, to know him and to get into the same moral conflict. Why? We are so made. That is natural human life. Maybe we can win a victory too. We aim not at perfection or holiness. We get busy in life. That becomes our salvation. We hesitate as Jesus hesitated. We soon have kinship with him in similar experiences. Beatitudes, Sermon on the

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Mount, and Golden Rule experienced in Jesus—who will point out the difference in such spiritual life in Jesus and in men?

Are not we called "Christian" on the very basis that we are living a life like his? As the spirit of man is made in the very image of God, so it lives as he lives. The personal human being, in all his activities, when normal and natural, rises into an activity like divine activity and with divine activity. As a man does the will of God, he becomes a second personal will co-living with God. He reveals in Jesus a brotherly love for his spiritual family. Such revelation is not exterior to himself but his very nature. He, chief of all, is inside the circle, a part of the whole relation, creator and sustainer of it all. In man we see God and in God we see men. Whatever hesitation, or bravery or death or sacrifice or life is in men, if we see divinity experiencing them, let us be assured it is an experience kindred to our own. We have no right—I say it reverently—to hold Judas, the Sanhedrin and Pilate to the laws of human justice, mercy and righteousness, without also holding Jesus and the Father in the same relations. Only thus can there be any meaning in the events of history. We do not need other eyes in order to see and understand this tragedy. We already have the eyes.

We are alike in nature. The mystery and unfathomableness is not in unlikeness. We are by nature keyed to every experience of Jesus. He has no holy of holies

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into which we are forbidden to enter because we are incapable of his experiences. He came a table-companion. He pitched his tent among us. It was "God with us," his children. The Father in and among and a part of his family. O, that we appreciated that presence. There is no part of our home life from which our daughter is shut because of a nature different from that of her father and mother. It is all for her. She may have every experience her father and mother have. It is her privilege, her right, indeed her very life—as she grows into it. The only difference is that of growth. We may grow up into Jesus' experiences, all of them. Thus Stephen is so much like Jesus in his death that he is called the first Christian martyr. He died as Jesus died, obedient, forgiving, loving, trusting. So may we all.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### The Resurrection

#### (a) THE RECORDS AND THEIR CRITICISM.

THE events after the death and burial of Jesus as recorded by Matthew are the following:

The same gang of bigots who crucified him set a watch, there is an earthquake, the two Marys arrive at the tomb, an angel appears and the guards become as dead, the angel rolls away the stone, declares Jesus risen and that he goes into Galilee to meet his disciples, Jesus meets the two Marys and repeats the angel's message, the priests bribe the guards into silence, Jesus meets the disciples in Galilee and gives his great commission to evangelize the world. To this record may be added that Mark mentions three women; adding Salome. He also names Peter in particular in the list to be informed of Jesus' resurrection.

Besides these things, Luke includes "Joanna and the other women" with the three who visit the tomb. Peter also runs to see. Two angels, instead of one, are at the tomb. Jesus meets the disciples at Jerusalem on two occasions and on the road to Emmaus he falls in with two and has an extended conversation. He states that Jesus is received up into heaven on the road by Bethany. And in the Acts, he states that it is forty days

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before that ascension and that the disciples are to tarry at Jerusalem till the Holy Spirit comes with power. The Fourth Gospel names John with Peter running to the tomb. It mentions also doubting Thomas. Also the great commission includes power to forgive sins. In the addition to this gospel is the record of an appearance to the seven fishermen of Galilee, the miraculous draught of fishes and the final commission to Peter. In the addition to Mark's record, the miraculous power to resist disease and poison is added to the great commission.

Such is the record before us. How it may be analysed or separated into parts, as the Galilean and Jerusalemite lines of stories, is not important here. Two things stand forth unquestioned. First, Jesus is alive. The continuance of the life of Jesus is the first great fact of this record. The disciples are convinced of this beyond doubt. It becomes the center of all motive power in them. Yet how that conviction arises is not so clear to us today. The record seems to make the bodily resurrection of Jesus the basis. But evidently the body has characteristics it did not have before. And this is the second fact of the record. The body is declared to be the same as that which went into the tomb. It is also declared to be a very different body, a spiritual body. In spite of actual marks of recognition and his eating food, he comes and goes suddenly and vanishes out of sight and into the heavens.

Therefore it is not bad exposition, but the best con-



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clusion, to state that all the events recorded, taken together, make room for the belief, here is a body that has spiritual qualities and is different from the one that was put into the tomb. Many are much comforted by this and are able to accept the record as authentic. This to them is the greatest of all miracles. And it does not imply for us a resurrection of our bodies; his physical body not being resurrected as it died. The resurrection, therefore, with Jesus and with us is only the unbroken continuance of our personalities in larger activity with the Father: this, of course, in some form of spiritual body. This harmonizes also with the reasoning of Paul.

Now, as stated, many desire to let the matter rest here and build upon it. They also eloquently urge, as the disciples, a good life here as the only worthy forerunner and condition of the life after death. But many have another view. In accord with the principle laid down at the beginning of this book, they desire to make some distinctions between Jesus and the men who wrote of him, in the light of local coloring and human experience. What they cannot experience is open to question and restatement—especially since all other religious prophets before Jesus are said to be crucified, dead, resurrected and ascended to heaven and that, too, in language and thought strangely like that found here. Let us hear these folks.

One New Testament record of an appearance of Jesus after the crucifixion has not been referred to.

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That is the appearance to Paul on the road to Damascus. Of this Luke tells the story in Acts. Also Paul refers to it in several ways. Once he seems to include it in the list as though it were Jesus in the flesh. But most often he refers to it as a spiritual apprehension. Jesus lays hold of him. "Have I not seen the Lord?" His spiritual consciousness of Jesus is a very real thing to him. And while he makes the statement (in all probability believing in the physical resurrection of his own body) "that he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you," he thus binds our resurrection with that of Jesus.

According to Paul, they are absolutely the same. So, if we, by further light, are convinced our flesh never lives again, must we affirm the same of Jesus or disagree with Paul? But however that may be, the appearance of Jesus to Paul, when all is considered, was in nature a spiritual consciousness such as we have, all of us. His thought about it and its value as authority with him rested on a spiritual apprehension. And this fact gives us our way out.

Does not the eating of the broiled fish, the showing of his pierced hands and feet, Thomas thrusting his hands into the open wound, as well as the guard and the angel, prove a little too much? Is faith made strong by flesh and blood? Can it build on material things? Is the reality and existence of the soul established thus? Is the resurrection that of the body?

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Did the soul, the spirit, the personality of Jesus go into the tomb? Does the soul of any one go into the grave? If not, can there be a resurrection of the soul? Did the disciples perceive Jesus who saves and gives life by looking on his physical body? Then why the apostasy of Judas? Did the disciples ever have any advantage over us in coming to know the Father in faith and love by the seeing of Jesus physically?

What sustained the disciples after the ascension? Does not the physical resurrection simply put Jesus and his disciples in their relation to each other back where they were before the crucifixion and postpone the act of saving faith till the moment after the ascension? And so the questions run on. If such things, crowned by the physical resurrection of Jesus before all men, are to be the basis of our salvation, I fear we are still hopeless. We may have a mediate and materialistic approach to Jesus but not an immediate and spiritual one.

But I stop short this usual line of argument and turn the attention to the real issue. It is not a matter of the truth or falsity of the things recorded as historic events. Nor is it whether or not the records are simply pagan myths carried over and attached to Jesus. Of which there is much unquestioned evidence. Whether this be so or not and whether these records are right or wrong, is all aside. These detailed events are the things set down as history by those reporting the men in whose religious consciousness Jesus is present as a liv-

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ing personality and intended to explain the origin of that consciousness. Which consciousness is the only bed-rock fact in the whole record. That is all the fact any of us have or need. From that every man today, as each man then, must write his own explanation. We do not need to deny or affirm their detailed record. We are duty bound to write our own based on our living experience. What we can and ought to demand is that all experience the consciousness of Jesus the living person. That done, explanation is another matter, however naturally it follows. A proper question is, Can they or we give the better explanation?

### (b) COMPARISON OF IDEAS THEN AND NOW.

Now, as a background, let us consider and compare the thinking of that age and our own in several relevant matters. First, there was then, and is now with many, a tendency to rest spiritual existence on a material basis. This is done thoughtlessly today. But it was serious business those days. Very few escaped it in their religious practices. All the miracles are recorded as material facts to upholster the prophet. They are marks of divinity, proofs of genuineness in spiritual power. Such works had great weight. They do today. The physical suffering of Jesus, the pictures of him, the baptism in a particular way, the bread and wine, relics and sacred places, and sacred books, physical births and so physical resurrections are all too effective with many today. But they do not make the ap-

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peal to the genuinely spiritually minded now that they did then.

The miracles of Jesus do not explain or establish him today. Spiritual activity and existence is not based on physical properties. Personal existence is a greater thing and independent of these things we call physical. Though one would not think it from our funeral customs. Indeed we now think them only the form or mode of expression of the personality. And it never stands or falls on them. They change continually to conform to spirit activity. Therefore the physical resurrection of Jesus would establish for us no spiritual truth, especially not personal immortality. That is a perception of personality alone.

A second matter is the manifest underlying purpose, not only of Matthew but of all four writers, indeed of all New Testament writers, to point out that this resurrection is done to fulfill Old Testament utterances of the future. They seem to fear people will forsake those writings unless such a connection is made. The value of foretelling an event and the absurdity of doing a great work just to make that utterance come true does not occur to them as it does not to multitudes today. What difference whether Jesus is the Messiah of Old Testament and Hebrew idealism? One way or the other, he must stand or fall on his own spiritual value as a person with power to save. Indeed, such things are likely to blind us to the eternal and real kinship of all prophets. Which relation is a very different matter

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from the question of Messiahs and prophecies of the future. However much that meant to them, it means nothing to us. Even to them it was a barren debate, though it seemed to be a cardinal matter. When Luke states that Jesus said "all things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the Psalms, concerning me . . . that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day, etc., etc." we are not much impressed.

The Old Testament utterances which are commonly pointed out as the answer to this statement are quite arbitrarily chosen. Also the purpose and value of it all for us and even for them forces us to wonder if he understood Jesus' exposition. Jesus never voluntarily urged that he was the Messiah. When he used the word he meant one thing and the people another. When John states that he writes to cause us to "believe that Jesus is the Messiah"—if that were all we would turn away hungry as ever. Such things are a real hindrance to us. They compel us to turn aside and seek other things. Jesus is not alive to fulfill their scriptures in that way. And in the same way he is not alive to us today because the gospel writers say so. Assurance in our hearts is not secure on that ground, however much theorists about the Bible may say. Especially do we state this when we know the uncertain date and authorship of the records.

In this connection should be mentioned the economic situation that modified the Jewish Messianic



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idea and was basic to much of the content of that conception. As people suffer under injustice and cruel persecution they idealize the more and hope for a golden age and heaven of relief. The negro slave's spirituals such as "Swing low sweet chariot, coming for to carry me home," are classic evidence of this. And the tyranny, economic exploitation, and cruel persecution of the Roman Empire before and during the first century of Christianity gave rise to a spiritual state in opposition, the content of which was a heaven of blessed relief. This was a burning fever in the breasts of all. In this the Jews were kindred to the Gentile world. For a divine Messiah always led them in their strikes. Into this Jesus came. And when he dealt with the matter they were eagerly expectant. "Dost thou restore the kingdom at this time?"

His truth has transformed their hopes, so that today we are able to realize his meaning. Not so then. At that time they took his truth and transformed it largely into their own conception. Their Messiah did not love their cruel masters. His leaven was indeed the little bit in the large measure. His personal friendship and solidarity with them in their sufferings was accepted and real. But they were able to yield only a little to his truth. Their representation of him was their own creation, his truth colored till it was hardly recognized. Their own heaven and hell persisted. All which is always the case with every prophet.

A third matter is the debate regarding the resur-

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rection of both soul and body. The ancients had great difficulty to conceive a soul separate from a body. This is why India has to have transmigrations. Pharisees and Sadducees contended here. Paul's sublime arguments in I Cor. witness to this discussion. They witness also to the fact that the Pharisees won out among Christians. Furthermore, coupled with this argument and rounding it out, was the doctrine of a general resurrection on the last day of the age. This was variously conceived. But all Christians came to hold to a final windup of things with all present to receive their rewards. Immortality was held in this form. Whether or not Jesus thought it is another question. Those who wrote of him state as much. It was all the thought of the time before and after him. People die and are buried. And soul and body wait till the end and are resurrected and come before God. As the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies and comes forth a new living form, so man dies and is raised. It is not a thing incredible with the first Christians that God should raise the dead in this way. Yet I drop a warning here.

Jesus in all he said about eternal life keeps pretty close to the vital content. We fail to find much of bodily resurrections. He is going to the Father. His disciples may come where he is. The eternity of life is always declared and assumed and filled with a great spiritual activity. He is on the side of the resurrectionists, yet it is not of bodily resurrections and empty

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existence. What he urges is a rich, full, abundant life, a life worth while. To him, it is the beginning and continuance forever of a loving, trustful service to men and God. People who follow him are rewarded with this eternal living.

Now these were some of the chief notions brought by the writers to the life of Jesus and which gave form to their records. And while some today are copies of that age in thinking of death and the future, most have dispensed entirely with a last day resurrection and general judgment with its hard and fast divisions, as well as a bodily resurrection. We do not expect our physical organism to take shape again in any form. And so we cannot think of Jesus' body coming forth from the tomb. Neither do we think our soul ever goes into a grave. And so again we cannot conceive of the personality of Jesus as having gone into the tomb. No stone was ever rolled in front of the spirit of Jesus. In place of all these things, we think of daily, conscious assurance of the divine spirit and of an activity of our souls in a larger way which we do not care to describe physically.

### (c) RESURRECTION IN PERSONAL ACTIVITY.

At last we are forced back on our personal experience. Matters of resurrection and the future life of Jesus as well as of all of us and of God the Father in his kingdom of righteousness and peace are matters of personal activity. In that realm alone can they be established. And it may be that when we have set

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forth the explanation of our personal consciousness true to our experience, we will find its essentials in theirs also. Communion of spirit is always mysterious as life and only in life. And we make it no plainer by getting outside that realm and declaring origins in material things. That which is born of the flesh is flesh. Personality is born of the spirit. What we do is to declare an event real which we cannot experience.

With Jesus as with God, let us not attempt to prove that he lives. That is what the accounts of Jesus after crucifixion seek to do. They seem to be necessary and answering someone asserting that Jesus is not alive. But none of this is necessary or valuable. Our souls reach out for God and eternal life naturally. Let us begin with that. We long to live and the more we work and the purer we live the more we desire to live on. Sin is what makes us want to die. The answer to our hope of eternal life is a moral and spiritual activity—love, trust, righteousness. This we see all about us and in all ages, especially the time of Jesus. The more we get into that activity of all-embracing holy fellowship, with Jesus as the center, the more we are conscious of its eternity. The two are one. It is a real life to us. No one can take it away. We passionately declare it to others. True living is divine and eternal. This is our experience. It is the green bay tree of the wicked that disappears. More and more we are finding the power and holiness of the life of Jesus the secure evidence of his divinity. It is also the evidence of

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ours. So, too, it is the evidence of his immortality as of ours. This we can experience.

Personal relations which we experience in our common life with men and Jesus and the Father are the reality of all reality. On this basis alone we can declare the existence of a personality. And I am convinced whatever else the disciples had, it was this fact that gripped them—slowly but surely in the days following the crucifixion of Jesus—and sent them out as invincible preachers and teachers to all the nations of the earth. And men who had time to write gospels instead of enriching their own personal activity among men and God are alone responsible for the other conception.

Do we realize that religion is first the living spirit in the souls of men? Then it gets down on paper—in a measure. Christians lived for years without written records. And we all must catch religion from persons. The thing I am crying out for with all my soul is that this most vital and blessed spirit communion, spirit with spirit, was the first fact in the lives of the disciples and Jesus alive after the crucifixion. Let this come in first. It belongs first. Surely Jesus came to them in the usual and eternal way before they could run to the sepulchre or gather in Jerusalem or Galilee. Did they not gather under the compelling power of that living personality coming to them and becoming conscious to them? Let this lead in convincing them that he lives, not bodily resurrection.

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God is manifest to us in spirit and truth. Was not that the way that Jesus came to them and told them that he was alive and gave his great commission? That is the kind of communion Jesus aims at. What more appropriate moment for its realization than that? Could not Jesus trust it? If he dare not, how shall we? But if that spirit communion was the way, if it was, *if it was!*—then we know by experience what the resurrection of Jesus was and the meetings of his disciples in those early days. We are saved, too, from a lot of questionings. We draw nigh those men with a real personal sympathy and understanding.

Another thing of great significance and bearing out this conclusion, is the fact that all the physical appearances recorded are to the friends of Jesus, to those who love him. True enough the soldiers are said to fall as dead men before him. But this is negative. The soldiers themselves are not reported as aware of him and witnessing that they recognize him as alive. We have given us no word of the five thousand to whom he is said to have appeared. No doubt many of them were not his disciples. Why have we no assertions or acts of those who put him to death, the ruling Pharisees and the Roman rulers? Surely they were interested.

If the physical resurrection is of such basic importance, how naturally would the victorious and living Jesus have manifested himself to them. This indeed would have been proof positive, such as men argue we



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need. If the physical resurrection fixed secure the disciples beyond all doubt, would it not also have won his enemies, or at least one or two of them? That is said to be the thing that holds men to Jesus today. We may well meditate a long time here. Truly, in the end, we are forced to conclude that he appears only to those who love him; only to those who have spiritual eyes; only to those living in spirit and truth and seeing in the same—after he is crucified, dead, and buried.

And what of the personal activity of Jesus recurred to their consciousness during those first days? His physical form or his truth and spirit? Are not these the words they recall after the shock and defeat of the crucifixion had passed? Is the assertion that he would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days the only utterance that recurred to their minds? Rather, does not confidence in the moral and spiritual life with Jesus revive? Is not that the resurrection? "Do you not remember?" they said one to another, "how he said 'He that liveth and believeth in me shall never die?'" Is not that true? Have we lost our trust in him? He lives and we shall live." Out of this kind of certainty, they renew their arguments on the resurrection—modified a little to be sure. Or, indeed, they may have borrowed them. Their Christ has come forth from the tomb also, gone into the heavens and will come again to receive them at the end of their age. Their faith revived and living through the

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tragedy of death, on this can rest the record left us, whether written by them or some one years later.

But to turn it about the other way is not only unworthy of them and makes a fault chief in their religion, but also shows they failed to grasp the essential teachings and experience of Jesus. Can such evangelistic zeal and conquest of men, as inspired them during those early days, rest on such a fault or misunderstanding? I repeat, it is the holiness and power of Jesus' life that convinces us of his immortality. And surely the basis of our assurance of eternal life for Jesus and for all of us must have been present as their ground work. Life essentials are the same for all peoples and ages. That they may have received not a little comfort out of the things recorded is admitted. Men do even today. But if we look for the other basis we can find it. Not in so many words, but as the implied basis for the new life manifest in the world. Only on such a basis, grown large and all important in them the moment we begin to contemplate it, can we unite with them in their victorious spirit and life. For it is the abundant spirit life, mind you, that they took up with so much confidence and assurance. Which is its own witness and has its own creative forces.

To this now we have come: that personality is immediately conscious of personality; that the appearance of Jesus to his disciples after his crucifixion was in fact the same as it is to us today; that this is discoverable in the gospel records; but is overshadowed

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very much by traditional stories of bodily manifestations. Which stories are accounted for by the peculiar thought of the age. "The soul had to have saviour-gods who died and returned to life: Attis, Dionysus, Cybele, Isis." \* So when we think back to those days we need to call up their inner faith as ours. It was alive as ours and lives upon and roots in the same things. To insist on physical resurrection and ascension as a support is only to put off a few days longer this necessary common faith activity. That it was well nigh gone after the crucifixion is evident and natural. And its resurrection began when there came back to their consciousness the living truth set forth in the many and rich ways of Jesus' teaching and life.

(d) AWAKENING CONSCIOUSNESS OF JESUS ALIVE.

"Did he not say, 'Do unto others as ye would have others do unto you?' We all remember that utterance. I believed in that before he died. Surely he practiced it. Is it destroyed by his death? Or is it an eternal spiritual truth and should we hold to it today and forever? It seems to recur to me these days of loneliness and sorrow with increasing force. I, for one, will try to make it my life as it was his. Also in that connection I remember that other saying, 'Give and it shall be given unto you; full measure, pressed down, heaped up, shaken together and running over.' That seemed hard and unreasonable. It is strange even today. But it is a most gracious thing in business rela-

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\*Berguer—*Aspects of the Life of Jesus* p. 288.

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tions. Hard, grasping, competitive trading would come to an end if that custom prevailed. Why may we not practice it? We all know how it was the custom of Jesus. Indeed, I am just beginning to see what he meant when he condemned the idle rich and the Roman government with its tax gathering machinery. All through it, the word of command is chief. Certain ones are appointed to rule over us and to do the 'dirty work.' Those who do the appointing and rule them are themselves appointed by others who in turn are lorded over by others. And so on up to the kings and governors, and finally the emperor himself. From the top down one chain of insolent commands, authority and tyranny.

"Yet Jesus brushed it all aside and declared the true organization amongst us should be helpful service. All working, no one idle or living in luxury or grasping or selfish or commanding. The more I think about being servant of all the more I am convinced he was right. Surely he worked that way himself. That is the life for me henceforth. What a big section of life would be transformed into peace and joy if this were realized. May be we can realize it. It surely is dangerous for us to take this position. Rome is jealous. There will be little love for us. But it is not to be simply an ideal. Jesus never stated it as such. All his truths he practiced. Indeed, out of his life came the abstract statement. I feel my soul would die if I did not live this truth. How I wish he were here. It

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might be easier. No wonder they put him to the cross. Pilate was jealous and rightly, and so the Pharisees.

“Never will I forget his attitude toward evil. Mine had always been justice and punishment, an eye for an eye, etc. But how different was Jesus. Return good for evil. Turn the other cheek. Go the second mile. Forgive trespasses. Love your enemies. Rejoice in persecution. Resist not evil. Rebuke and condemn wickedness in high places. What a rebuke he gave to the Pharisees. How he drove the grafters from the temple. Yet this seemed an uncontrolled passionate moment. He would have been no force against them had they had the conscience to resist him with force.

“What was a whip of reeds as a weapon? The great full current of his life against evil is without material force. His greatest opposition was non-resistance, soul force. That is the strongest and most compelling thing in the world. How firm he could be. How it disarmed his enemies when he would not use force. They were ready to fight but not to deal with this unusual manner of fighting. Self-possessed and firm, he seemed to stand as a giant among pygmies. What a faith, what a spirit that can say as they nail him to the cross, ‘Forgive them, for they know not what they do.’ What a peace of mind in the midst of a mob. I never saw the like. O, for trust in the Father such as that. If that is the way God fights evil, then surely it is magnificent. I will never forget

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it. I cannot believe it is folly. It strangely gripped me and compelled my approval. I learned something in the last rebellion. No more Barabas for me. Give me Jesus' way of life. That never dies. It fights on forever. That is the fight that overcomes the cross and brings peace to a warring world. A new way to oppose wickedness. I like it. It is mine.

"And what a world of teachings on life's relations floods my mind. Never man spake like he. His Beatitudes, not caring but glad in the midst of suffering; the poor, the meek, the mournful, the peace-makers, the persecuted—even they are blessed. Strange, strange indeed. How simple he made the complex and most difficult things. No worry. Lay not up treasure on earth. Let your conversation be 'Yes' and 'No.' Be sympathetic in judgments. Realize your ideals in actions. What a treasure is the kingdom of love, how wonderful its growth, what a chance to work. How he made himself the center of it all equal with God. The good shepherd, the vine and the branches. What compassion for the lost in the parables of the prodigal son, the lost sheep and the good Samaritan.

"What a stimulus he gave to the cure of disease. He was health itself. I never thought before that disease could be conquered. It seems that the whole life receives a wonderful and new setting up. With the love motive filling all the laws of life, all requirements are met. The attitude and disposition of soul meet all requirements of law. Jesus is the teacher for me. I



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want no other. Such insight, such revelations of truth, such true living—surely he was the Son of God. Such high living never dies.

“But of all things hard to understand, this is the hardest: ‘He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.’ I gave up understanding this saying. It seemed such a contradiction. Also when he said, ‘I have power to lay down my life and I have power to take it again.’ But at last I begin to see what he means. Perhaps I never would have understood if he had not lived this saying before my eyes. Now I believe I understand. If this statement is true, Jesus has gained his life. It seems there is a continual choice between living the natural life and the spiritual life. One is self centered; the other centers in our fellow men, in truth and in God. If we save ourselves in the one, we are lost in the other. What is there of the one so valuable that we can give it in exchange for the other? Surely and always our soul life is first.

“How many live as though this life were all and they must get all the things of this earth. He seemed to think them of small value, when he could have had about as many as any man. How he disappointed us and threw away his chance right when it seemed to be within his grasp. There seemed to be a deeper, more eternal life than what we saw. When one carefully considers this statement, he was surely a fool unless, unless this that he said was eternal living, the life to

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be gained, is a fact. If it is, then the future life is more than I thought. I see, too, what he meant when he said that we would be with him. He is there in that kind of activity. They crucified him but he lives. And if I lose one life and gain the other, I gain eternal life with him. It is all plain enough now. It is a tragic and bold venture on truth. What a revelation of the nature of life has come to me since I met Jesus and especially since these days of tragedy. These thoughts and sentiments and life throbs going through my soul this minute seem to be Jesus himself. Of course he lives. This glorious life can come only from life. Redeem Israel? Indeed! Redeem all men.

"O, if all men could catch the vision I have and be moved as I am this moment. His life has become one with mine. He has lived himself into my life. Such wonderful radiant personality, transforming all it touches. I am able to think of him only as life, as vital energy, as wonderful activity. He is more present to me now in my best moments than when I looked into his face, talking to us on the mount in Galilee. I see now with spiritual eyes as I did not then. How near we can be to one in the flesh and yet not understand him. But revelations of God are in the spirit, the personality, active in human relations. I understand him now. My spirit is at last in true fellowship with him."

Now this, I insist, is our experience of Jesus and I believe was present as the heart and soul of the experience of those disciples after the death of Jesus. What

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else they had, they surely had this. This is eternal and universal. It involves personality as life and inseparable from the common acts of life. It involves human solidarity. It means that God can live in human life, in human relations. When once He is there in any of his manifold, ever new, unfolding revelations, He is there for good and for all the world. It means that if physical properties are the enmeshing of that divine life, they exist and take shape only as the divine and human spirits will them. And if the physical body is thus willed forth from the grave, it is of value only as it becomes forever a part of human experience—this I cannot find today either by personal observation or reliable report—a thing to be reincarnated in all human lives as the Golden Rule or the silent, firm, powerful non-resistance before Pilate and Caiaphas.

Thought forms change slowly. All the thought of a resurrection the people of Jesus' time had was of a life in connection with a body. All the teaching of Jesus regarding the life beyond the grave was of a spiritual activity, a personality surviving with a rich and full activity, and nothing concerning a body. This they accepted from him. But this did not completely nor at once supplant their old thinking. That continued in the best of them, and does to this day with some, often taking precedence of Jesus' truth and reconstruction material forms.

The real ethical and spiritual life Jesus found here is the life that continues. It is real in time and space

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now and has many historic events we may all experience. All of which are the real side of the inner soul act of faith in the assertion of Jesus, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." But all this they did not realize when Jesus came, nor at once clearly after he left. If they had experienced it in large measure and as men come now to experience it they would not have allowed themselves to be cumbered with a physical resurrection. And if the real thing can go on in us now without our experiencing that physical resurrection, then we rightly challenge the reality of that resurrection. The eternal life Jesus gives to us here and now stands without it. Did it not stand without it then? Will it not stand without it all the more in the next world?

This too, is the eternal gospel of Jesus. It was the heart of the message of the first disciples, is now of us disciples and ever shall be. Jesus is alive. That is the truth Paul gave us. That is what all Christians declare—"and hath appeared unto me." Anything more than this is of small concern.

But once again. All this leaves unexplained the material fact of the bodily resurrection believed in so sincerely by those first disciples then (?) (a big question mark when we know the origin of the four written records) and multitudes since. Indeed it does. That is a scientific problem, not a religious one. The historian

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and the psychologist must deal with it. With them it is not yet settled completely. The historian is through. For him it is not a historical fact. But the psychologist is not through, though he is well on the way to account for this mental attitude and conviction. But when they are done, it will still be a matter of intellectual acceptance or rejection as it is now. Having rejected the historicity of the bodily resurrection and accepted it as a corruption from paganism or a projection of a psychic state explainable and understandable, the great religious experience of Jesus alive and evident to our religious consciousness is exactly the same for us that it was for the first disciples after the so-called ascension of Jesus. The necessary act of faith is the same for all and in no way affected by a bodily resurrection. Of this act I have tried to write.

## CHAPTER XX.

### The Church

#### (a) THE PRESENT SITUATION.

(1). Matthew 14:33; (2). chap. 16:13-19; (3). chap. 15:21-28; (4). chap. 20:20-28; (5). Acts 4:32-37; (6) Acts 6:1-6; (7). Matthew 9:16, 17; together with the parables.

THE scripture references placed at the head of this chapter are selected from many with the purpose of illustrating particular phases of the church. The first simply makes Jesus the center of the institution, the revelation of God. The second is selected to show the power of life and death for men which the church is purposed to realize. All humanity lives or dies as the church is true or not to its work. No notice is given here to the apparent late date of this paragraph. Several centuries can well be placed between this paragraph and the corresponding one in Mark. The third means that Jesus is for all races of men. The fourth sets forth the true order of loving service for the church as for all society. The importance of this reference cannot be overestimated. The fifth shows beyond question the communism of the first church, and suggests the class of the lowly as the



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one among which the church took root. Not many mighty or noble were found in its folds. And its folds were very much a copy of the many, many religio-economic communes of the lowly. This illustrates also the great variety of church organization to harmonize with national customs. The sixth illustrates the division of labor begun then and carried to such great detail today in ecclesiastical organization. The seventh is chief of all. For the church organization that has not a living developing form that continually adjusts itself to the enlarging spiritual activity set forth in the parables is sure to be broken and cast aside.

The institution of the church comes to the Twentieth Century shaped almost entirely on the individualistic and intellectual basis. Doctrines and polity, intellectually stated, have been formed to fit a salvation of a soul separate and alone. They have considered Jesus and his saving work as outside and above humanity, and then coming down into our midst to save our souls one by one. So our organization is made to fit this conception. The social element, which is the big element in the work of Jesus, has been overlooked. This element resolves itself into human relations. And there is where Jesus lives and all men live today. There is manifest their activity. And the institution of the church should be the formal expression of this social activity.

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### (b) THE MASTER-SLAVE SOCIAL STATUS.

Now let us see the social and institutional side of Jesus' work and personality. To do this we need to go outside the Biblical records. True enough, we find much there that tells us the nature of the new social order Jesus came to establish as a vital part of his salvation, especially that with regard to the church of his time. But there is a larger conception to be had concerning the larger, all-inclusive social order of his time. Society as a whole had been for centuries the few masters and the many slaves. And in Jesus' day this unnatural and inhuman relation was hard to bear. The world was about to collapse shaken with wars and strikes. Hate between masters and slaves was most intense. Jesus' social teachings and life meant the destruction of this social order and the building of a new one.

This master-slave status forced a two-fold organization of society: the master in the political and authoritative government and the slaves in labor unions or communes or guilds or private brotherhoods. The masters represented about one fourth of the population and the slaves three fourths. The masters had the property with the profits and income from the slave laborers. They had the time to organize and maintain an army, and could therefore enforce their will. They were not more intelligent or capable than the slaves. If anything they were less so. There were thousands and thousands of trade guilds or labor

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unions in the time of Jesus and had been for ten or more centuries before him. Asia Minor was full of them. They were for mutual protection and relief. The conditions of life for the slave population were terrible and beastly, and made all the more so by the Roman government. Everywhere the Roman government went it accentuated this order of workers and idle rich.

Rome's wars were wars to make more slaves for Roman masters, or to put down rebellions of slaves. These masters seized the land and property. There were strikes and strikes in the ancient world. The strike of the Hebrews in Egypt was but one of thousands. They were always looking for a Messiah, a wonderworker who would bring freedom. Led by such a person in every instance, the slaves would rebel, organize a mob for an army, kill and destroy, revenge their injustices, become jealous of each other, lose their vantage and finally be crushed by the well drilled armies of their masters. Their motives were reckless despair and revenge, on the verge of which they lived all the time. Their course of action was: kill those who enslaved them and lived in luxury and corruption: get free by force and enjoy the fruits of their own labors. Plunder, self-indulgence, jealousies, intrigues and insubordination always resulted and caused the failure of the strike.

Some of the great strikes were: the strike of the 20,000 silver miners of Laurium; going over to the

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Spartans and ending the Peloponnesian War in 413 B.C. In the island of Chios, 130 B.C., a strike of large proportions under Drimakos, the Just, was successful as long as he lived. In Spain, 149 B.C., Viriathus wins remarkable victories over the Roman legions, real battles for liberty, freeing his people for twenty years. In Pergamos, 133 B.C., Aristonicus for four years holds out against oppression. This was a great uprising. Blossius of Cumae near Pergamos, a social reformer under Aristonicus, was a personal friend of the Roman Gracchi. In 143-133 B.C., all Sicily is in successful revolt under Eunus, the slave king. This was a bloody strike of large proportions. In 104 B.C., and for five years, Athenion leads Sicily in a second revolt. But chief of all, Spartacus, 74-70 B.C., wins most of Italy and defies the Roman legions for four years. His achievements are most remarkable, making him a greater military genius than Caesar as well as the greatest strike leader of all time.

It is a hard matter to find reliable records of these strikes and the work of the unions. The masters kept the historical records. When anyone dared to be a true historian, faithful to the facts, his writings were destroyed or changed. Also the brotherhoods were secret organizations with rituals of a semi-religious nature. One had to be initiated to know about the workings of the organization. Records were not likely thus to become public property. But the truth has its own way of recording itself for future ages to read. Stone

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slabs, many of them along the Mediterranean commemorate these labor unions or guilds or communes. With great patience and care C. O. Ward in his book, *The Ancient Lowly*, (1889 Press of *The Craftsman*,) after whom I write and quote, has discovered the facts. There is sufficient evidence if we listen to it. And when we do, our ancient histories will tell a different story. The real stream of human life will be seen. The military achievements and character of Caesar and Cicero will fade before men like Spartacus and Viriathus and the Gracchi. They will come forth in their true light as the champions of oppression and cruelty.

These communes respected labor and exalted it. The masters in their governments degraded it. They helped each other and had a rude form of brotherhood. While divisive, destructive competition was the principle on which the masters organized themselves. Says Ward, (p. 496), "They all seemed to have possessed the kernel, not of dishonest and hypocritical, but of honest and real socialism, such as Jesus and the early Christians struggled to plant as the ultimate plan of all men to follow. They were all certainly alike in helping each other, in cooperating with mutual aid, in a perfectly democratic form of religion . . . They had lived the revolution for many years before Jesus came to sweep it, by one majestic and amazingly omnipotent stroke, out of its modest secrecy into the open blaze of maddened, gnashing public opinion and

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fling it upon the warring tempests of the aged competitive system, the foundation rock of paganism."

Many have been misled as to the true nature of these societies. They did many things, but labor was the center of all. (p. 501) "The more popular and trivial issues like the palliatory flattery of idol worship, the vain boasting of prophets, the popular flute music, dances, processions and burial ceremonies, covered up the view of labor." The "Baccahanalia" have been wilfully misrepresented. They were the joyous breathing moments of the secret labor societies. The obloquy comes from the fact that they were lowly slave laborers. They dared to have an evening dance once a month—a decent, well-ordered association of laboring people.

The accusation of Jesus was that he came eating and drinking. Notwithstanding all this, labor and mutual aid were the soul of these societies (p. 509) "The common fund of the association was devoted to mutual aid and assurance, destined to furnish advances to members in need, to provide for them in cases of sickness and defray the expenses of a decent burial." (p. 508) "The unity and brotherhood shown to have existed among the secret societies is almost touching. The more the upper stratum of society was distracted by the consequence of the competitive system having failed, the more completely did the brotherly love system of labor unions grow into usefulness." This gives point to Jesus' "The meek shall inherit the earth,"



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and "How hardly shall a rich man enter the kingdom of heaven." (p. 509) ". . . Kings, nobles, money-changers and politicians were fighting and dashing each other against the competitive rocks of the pagan aristocracy." While these men were "the real planters of the future state."

Now Palestine was not without these labor communes. The speculative Romans of court favor, numerous and enterprising, had grabbed the land and property. The Pharisees held their position of authority at their command. So it is not only probable but quite likely true that Jesus, who was one of these labor-men, was familiar with this economic situation. And it is not unreasonable to think that he and his father were members of a commune. At any rate he saw the injustice to the workers; for his sympathies were with the workers. The great prophets of the Old Testament were social reformers. And Jesus was one of them, in line with John. And now at the breaking point of the master-slave status of society, Jesus comes to lead them, a Messiah as usual to lead the irascible strike for freedom. This hating, vengeful, suffering mass of men was his brotherhood. He was born into it all. But he was not the usual Messianic leader. He taught and worked to put a new spirit into the struggle.

Resist not evil. Love your enemies. That wins freedom when all other methods fail. This was his aim in organization. A new social order of servant and master, not like the great ones lording it over each

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other in a succession of autocratic authority. All are to be workers for the good of all, performing a lowly service. This is what he brought as a Messiah to the laborers and laborers. He gave no thought, only sharp rebuke to the Pharisees. Yet he did not satisfy the masses. He was a new kind of strike leader. But he was a worker among workers and his church was a commune among communes. Witness the first organization after he was gone. It is very much like the economic organizations of the lowly of that time. All things were in common. Brotherly love was everywhere. Its failure, too, was due to the same old jealousies.

Not that there were no humanity loving men and women among the upper stratum. No doubt there were many. And they touched hearts with Jesus. But when they spoke for the oppressed it was only to renounce and be renounced by their friends. Claudius and the Gracchi of Rome were such. The former opposed the proud Cicero who sneeringly says, "Sextius Claudius is without credit, without hope, without home, without goods." Yet he had renounced these things in order to champion the cause of the slaves, and died for them.—How false have been our school books—This gives meaning to the words of Jesus, "Every one that hath left houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundred fold, and shall inherit eternal life." So Tiberius Gracchus, 140 B.C., declared that "wild game

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have holes; and for everything there is some shelter, some retreat; but the poor who struggle and die for Italy, though they have air and light, have nothing more. Houseless and homeless they wander with their wives and little ones. Those military gentlemen lie, who admonish soldiers against permitting workmen's graves and sacred things to be desecrated by the enemies; for not one has a family altar of his own, not one among all these Romans a burial place. The poor must struggle and die for the blustering drunkenness and the corrupted wealthy called nobility whom their labors create and sustain."—

True words. For that was the situation. And Jesus, by choice or birth, no matter, was counted among them and remained with them willingly. He was not the only one who had not where to lay his head. Even today the symbol of Jesus is a cross and a red one. All Christians are glad to wear a red cross. Yet red was the color of the flag of these guilds. The masters were the blue-blooded people with the blue flag. They are such today. (p. 449), "The cross was the ignominious punishment inflicted only on felons and working people, often for the most trivial, or merely imagined, or trumped-up offences, while the arch criminals of 'family' were allowed the noble supplicium." Jesus in his trial and crucifixion with trumped-up charges and hurry and indignities was receiving no unusual treatment. He received what came to all working people who broke with the established order. He had broken

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with the ecclesiastical authorities who were creatures of the Roman masters. He was not singled out from the rest and given something unusual. Thousands had received crucifixion as he. It was the reward of being a strike leader and Messiah.

In the *Outlook* of March 15, 1922, is Lyman Abbott's excellent article, *The Ambitious Ecclesiastic*. In that he sets forth the remarkably merciful code of the Jewish Sanhedrin as follows: "The court could not be convened at night; the accused could not be condemned on his own confession; two witnesses were necessary to secure sentence of death; these witnesses must be examined in the presence of the accused; he had the opportunity of cross examination; a perjurer was liable to the penalty which would have been visited upon the prisoner in case of conviction; the latter had a right to be heard in his own defence; a verdict could not be rendered on the same day as the trial, nor on a feast day; the discovery of new evidence, even after the preparations for the execution had commenced, entitled the condemned to a new hearing."

But the degenerate and disorderly times made possible a complete disregard of these court customs. Every rule of the court just stated, in the trial of Jesus as recorded in the gospels, was broken or compromised. Why? Because, "The high priesthood, an office partly religious, partly political, was filled by creatures of Rome, appointed and removed at the pleasure of the Roman governor. For fifty years, this office had been

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under the control of Annas. He appointed whom he would. Five of his sons held in succession the no longer sacred office. It was held at this junction by a son-in-law, Joseph Caiaphas. Both father and son were creatures of the Roman court; both belonged to the Sadducaic party and were openly infidel concerning some of the articles of the Hebrew faith regarded as fundamental truth by the Pharisees or orthodox Jews. Both were professional politicians. The patriotism of these priests was that of the place hunter. 'If we let him alone,' they said, 'we shall lose both our place and our nation.' In their view, it was far better that Jesus should lose his life and the Judean courts their purity than that they should lose their offices."

All which shows a complete dominance of the Roman government in the handling of Jesus. That is, it was the established society of property owning masters of Rome who gave Jesus the shameful travesty of justice. They gave it to him because he is considered one of the slave population of their empire. Had he been able, "with a great price" to say as Paul: "scourge a man that is a Roman and uncondemned?"; had he been one of the master class of society or a creature of it, he would have been given "due process of law." In spite of the fact that he taught his kingdom was the seed growing secretly and peacefully, whether or not Pilate perceived the social significance of this dynamic, he was counted with the lowly, the poor and the slaves, and so treated.

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Furthermore, the troubles, mobs, ecclesiastical difficulties, trials, appeal to Caesar, and death in the end of the Apostle Paul were simply the result of his practical renunciation, as a disciple of Jesus, of the slave-master social order. Remember. It was always startling when Paul claimed Roman citizenship. It was so out of accord with his associates who had little or no rights. Which also has been the experience of millions of the disciples of Jesus and is today of those disciples daring to declare the solidarity of humanity and to take up the cause of the poor who admittedly can get little or no justice in the midst of the present economic order.

One thing further. (p. 511 of Ward), "It is a singular and natural fact that wherever the unions were thoroughly established, and so to speak, nested together, the Christian church was sure to first plant itself. Thus Pergamos, the seat of the great uprising of workingmen under Aristonicus, 133-129 B.C., became the mellow ground wherein the early Christians planted and on which they reared one of their most celebrated churches." In Cappadocia the unions had strong hold, as in Iaodicea, Ephesus, Hieropolis and Rhoades. It is, again, a singular fact of no small importance that Apamia near Antioch was the birth-place of Eunus the great slave king of Sicily and Athenion, the hero of the second Sicilian strike war. And at Tarsus, near Antioch also lived St. Paul, the great apostle to the Gentiles and founder of more churches than any other apostle. To whom did the



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apostle go? To the great ones or to the lowly? Was it the poor who had the gospel preached to them? Whatever property owners came to be Christians were of such importance as to be noted.

The fact is, the whole setting of the ministry of Jesus is this working world and this warfare of master and slave. The more one thinks of it the more it grows upon him. He condemned the strike methods as much as he rebuked the masters. And he loved all men, even and especially the poor. His announcement of his ministry in the synagogue at Nazareth, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, etc."—Jesus threw himself into humanity's struggles for justice and freedom from oppression as one of the Messiahs. And men must choose their leader. It is either Spartacus and Eunus or Jesus. Jesus taught a peaceful salvation with universal brotherhood and a heavenly Father of all. The others taught revenge and irascible warfare. The last had been tried many times and failed as often as tried. Jesus saw it and was moved no doubt thereby to the conviction that there was a better way that was true to human life. So he took up the old conflict, but with love leadership. How much better today is our chance for success with a large middle class. In those days, there were only two economic groups. With love leading the way, we can do wonders never dreamed of then.

Further evidence of this situation of Jesus and his disciples, and the early church organization, is found

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in the records of Paul, the first New Testament writer. All his writings have to do with two things: the break with Judaism and special advices in personal living. With Judaism, the particular issue was circumcision for all in accord with its formal ceremonial law. Around this issue, gathered all his great arguments and positive theology. The Christian communion was breaking from the synagogue and struggling out into a larger world freedom. At the same time, when Paul was through with arguments on this subject, and had turned to the subject of practical, positive daily life; when he thought of love among men, there is no subject that gets more specific attention than the master-slave status in connection with the Roman Empire. Instance his letter to Philemon, Romans 13:1-7; Eph. 6:5-9; Col. 4:1, and the ever-recurring phrase "bond or free." Also see the reasoning in the paragraph found in I Peter 2:18-25.

How to get on in the established economic order and maintain the disposition of love toward all men, was the great problem of the early Christian. Surely in this particular more than anywhere else, is the occasion and value of Jesus' teaching of non-resistance, returning good for evil and loving one's enemies. To be true to that command was the hard task of the slave. "If, when you do well, and suffer for it, ye shall take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." The masters, in their forced competition with each other, had no point of contact for this essential truth of Jesus. The

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rude brotherly love in the labor unions, in spite of the injustice of their masters, was such a point of contact. Extend this attitude to include all men, even masters. If that is done and masters are kind toward slaves, they both can be members of the same church or brotherhood.

Still further. What is the background of a discourse such as is reported in John 6:52-69? "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood abideth in me, and I in him," or "hath eternal life." The figure seems strange and absurd to some practical folks and they say, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Therefore he explains further. "As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father; so he that eateth me, he also shall live because of me." "He that eateth this bread shall live forever." "It is the spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life." Eat and drink the teachings of Jesus. That is what he means. His cause, his mission, his spirit life from the Father, his fellowship, walking with Him and agreeing with Him in thought and spirit is what he means. To all which they are unable to assent, and turn and leave him. "This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" "Upon this many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him."

Why were they leaving him? What were his hard sayings, his words of spirit and life? Why were they hard? Why would they not eat him? Why do they

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forsake him as disciples and only a few cling to him as in desperation?—"To whom shall we go?" We all know why.—"Love your enemies."—"Shall I love my hated Roman masters? Those who persecute me and say and do all manner of evil against me falsely? You want me to follow that program? Not I. Is that *justice*? Never! The old way for me. Strike for your rights!

"If the people only knew what they could do. They are three to one of the Romans. We could easily defeat them. They would not have a ghost of a show. We are slaves only because we are afraid to fight.—No. None of that sickly love for me. That is talk for babes. Imagine a Roman legion listening to that. Behold! Let us all go out to meet them with love.—Bah!—Fight them! Kill them! That is the only way to treat them. But, 'Love them.' That is way beyond me. A great man and gracious personality, this man Jesus is, I grant. Too bad. What a Messiah he would make. He has it in him. The people would follow him in a minute. But his method is wrong. It never will work. He never will get the people organized on such a basis, with such teachings, such ideals. He is a dreamer. Too bad."—

O, we have heard their arguments again and again. It is all familiar. Go into a labor union today. You get it all first hand. Listen in on a manufacturer's association meeting. Talk with a foreman or boss or superintendent. Or stand silent and fearful before an

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immaculate, zealous, and purely patriotic berater of the "pacifists," "these silly boobs prating about outlawing war." Whack! Down comes his fist. "Don't you know anything about human nature?"—Yes, we know. We know why the people left off following Jesus. They went a little way, expecting him to lead them in one final, grand, universal, victorious *strike*. They saw he would not do it and left him.

S. Angus has a chapter in his book, *The Mystery Religions and Christianity*, in which he names seven reasons for the spread of those religions. They had the field in the Graeco-Roman world when Christianity entered. First, he named individualism. The great mass of men had no hope in the social organization and were left to get what they could out of an individualistic life. Second, there was a world-wide syncretism of all life. Fourth, a new sense of sin and failure had gripped all men. Fifth, asceticism. Sixth, universal cry for salvation. Seventh, a yearning for immortality. And third, in the seven reasons, he names religious private associations; describing their extent and epoch-making character (p. 196-206). These are the same organizations which Ward calls unions and communes. S. Angus looks at them from the religious viewpoint. But he recognizes their economic character. He calls them "private brotherhoods or guilds of a more or less religious character." These were clubs or "guilds of fishermen, fullers, bakers, bargemen, wood-cutters, smiths, butchers, workers of

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the mint, of trades such as perfume venders, wine merchants, of ex-soldiers and sailors, and of convivial idlers. Private unions, semi-industrial, semi-religious, belong to a primitive stage of Roman history."

Much was done by the government to suppress these private associations. But in spite of it all, they grew in answer to the universal demand for social organization. "In the face of that world-wide and all-powerful system, the individual subject felt ever more and more his loneliness and helplessness. The imperial power might be well-meaning and beneficent, but it was so terrible and levelling in the universal sweep of its forces that the isolated man seemed in its presence reduced to the insignificance of an insect or a grain of sand." "The state had become too large for the self-realization of the individual." While many motives are found for men joining these clubs, yet the industrial and religious motives were chief. "These guilds vindicated for the lower orders their freedom and represented the dignity of labour."

Now the point here is this. Jesus came into the midst of these seven problems of the mystery religions and gave men a new way of living which solved every one of them. Chief of all seven, was that of social organizations. That was the upper and nether millstone for Jesus as for all men. He condemned the Roman government and he offended the strike methods of the private associations by his principles of love and trust among all men. But, nevertheless, the only place



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where he could make any sort of contact with men was in these private brotherhoods. There was a rude, real humanity with a little democracy and brotherhood. Into their problem, he threw himself.

### (c) JESUS AND HIS CHURCH IN THIS ORDER.

Now we are ready. First of all it is a moral struggle. This person, Jesus, we discover in a moral battle, individual and social. Considered individually, his activity—he was a worker—is a fine effort at right personal relations with his fellow men. Considered socially, in economics, in the church and in the home, his activity is the same fine effort at right personal relations, just and true. In both, he had a passion for justice. In both, his soul found peace.

In the great moral struggles of his time he had a part. While he played his part, his mind worked out and stated the finest principles of life. All which gave him peace, salvation and life eternal. In the midst of it all, as the true field of human life, God came. That was his religion. In describing this personal experience of his, he used the family and called it a filial relation to God and a brotherly relation to men; all men. Not hate but love which always seeks the good of others in kindly service, he declared to be the highest moral force. It is always constructive and life giving and must have its way in moral problems.—Those who keep these commandments, believe him enough to do so, are saved with him—This is the Church of Jesus, the commune of this Jesus Messiah. This brotherhood

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won out in the midst of all the brotherhoods and cults of the mystery religions.

In the light of all these things, how about the fine intellectual struggle for the proper statement of creeds around which to organize a church? Or how about a campaign for members, a survey of the community to determine whom to organize into a church. Isn't all that child's play? Organization should be round about action. How foolish to compel folks to be true to a set of rules in a church polity or discipline. People discover a moral issue in life's relations and in the institutions of life. They take this up and struggle to realize it there among persons. They are love-filled moral workers among workers. Their church organization takes shape around and in this moral work. Having won that moral victory, they discover another issue and go at that in the same way, conserving all that has been won before. The organization again modifies itself to be the nature of this enlarged moral activity.

A church of Jesus is a church only when in the moral battle. If it has no moral issue, all the intellects on earth cannot organize it and keep it organized. If it has that issue, the organization comes easy and natural. The church is in the flux of life all the time, always in trouble, always creating, always in travail, always at the point of tragedy.

### (d) CORRUPTION OF THE CHURCH.

But this seems hard and we shrink from it. Then

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one of two things happens, or both of them. There is a mushroom growth of sects. The mental struggle to get just the right order results in strange doctrines and unheard of varieties of churches. Sentimentalities, spiritualities and religiosities get first place as serious doctrines. Much side machinery is created. Many novelties are exalted as the last great religious attainment. In one county in Ohio some twenty of the sixty churches, one by one, closed their doors. And the other forty became cold and formal. They were the genuine churches which died because they ceased the moral struggle. In their place have opened up, no one knows how or whence, an equal number of churches with extravagant doctrines and strange and fanatical religious practices. Sane folks dubbed them "Holy Rollers" and "Holy Coasters." They will cease only when serious, true moral activity is revived.

If not that results, then the busy-bodies will vie with the stand-bys and pillars of the church to keep alive the spirit and religious zeal in old dead form. The busy-bodies hustle and entertain the public with intellectual niceties and ice-cream. The others, living much in the past, become idealists. From saving men, they turn to saving the church. Support the church. Build it up—of course spiritually as well as in numbers, but especially in numbers. Thus they make an institution apart from life and quite formal. They search for men who can bring things to pass that can be tabulated and recorded. They contribute liberally (?) and

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are fine bench warmers. (By the way what were the figures of those on the roll of the church when Jesus died? I mean the very day he died? Just John stood near. Peter had his name removed from the record early that morning.)

Wanting visible results in figures, great, serious, man jobs pass them by. Their spirits no longer function in justice and righteousness but drop back into forms and idealisms. Their following of Jesus dies. For God in Jesus comes to the personal spirit only as it stands on its own feet, original, creative, free, and active in moral and just human relations.

Now it is these latter folks that always talk of spiritual power, of God working in their midst, of baptism of the spirit. They say, Come to God first and then go to work. Get the heart right first. Submit to God. (Thinking of some cherished formula). Salvation is of God. Call on him to save us. And they grow eloquent in prayers, entreating God to help "and that right early." Let us gather at the altar and not try to save ourselves but let God save us. We must begin with God. Emphasize the divinity of Jesus. Notwithstanding the fact that God in Jesus is God in human flesh, when one describes the human life of Jesus, a human person thus divinely inspired, they make accusation of robbing him of his divinity. They assume a sort of guardian angel attitude toward the Almighty. They really do not believe God can be in men. Personal re-

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lations with them is a thing of the mind not of the will and heart.

The trouble is with this notion of the way God is related to the soul. They believe God is imminent. Yet he is austere, dignified and authoritatively commanding. When in fact he is brotherly, democratic, working hard, nearer than hands and feet to those working. They have in mind an authoritative Bible and utterances to be obeyed. Therefore the church should be obeyed. And of course in its doctrines. They do not fully get away from kings and monarchies to real democracies. In spite of themselves, it is God on his throne and it is the "Kingdom" of God, not the democracy of God. Their heavenly Father is still the great manager and formal law giver, writing laws on tables of stone and not on hearts of flesh. For them, we get our life of trust through the intellectual channel which soon or late is concerned with the niceties of ceremonies. Real democracy and the child in our midst have not yet become a part of their living experience. "Obey God," is their cry.

Now in democracy there is little place for authoritative command as commonly understood. During the war we saw how readily the autocratic governments functioned in the creation and operation of an army, and how slowly the democratic governments were to function in this way. Men did quite a little reasoning as to how we might make the will of the people center in authority to command and to bring things to pass.

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They concluded if we cannot center this common will in a man with authority to enforce, democracy will fail. They bewail, too, the lawlessness of democracy. It is the kind of government which makes laws, but not to be obeyed.

But all that was very much aside from the truth. It is the old mistake of mixing autocratic forms with democratic forms. There is really no place for an army in democracy. An army is a creation of autocratic government; form, action, and all. It is foreign to the real nature of democracy. Therefore how can they ever operate harmoniously? When our army must function in war, we are forced to create a temporary autocratic machinery of operation.

So, too, with authority, the heart and soul of an army, this is an inheritance from autocracy. Democracy, when realized more fully, will not elect folks whose business it is to tell people what to do in a commanding way as in an army, and to make decisions for them and set them in order. We now, as democrats, are carrying a great burden of men democratically elected to autocratic jobs, ruling us and standing us here and there. They do not fit into the way of Jesus. In the church, especially, they are out of place. There is order and system; center and circumference to the Christian group. But all of which is not that of an army.

There are none to whom we delegate simply and only the task of overseers, watching that each one does



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his task. That, with its big salaries,—its very salaries condemn it as materialistic—is a supererogation in democracy. In that, each one works at a task articulated with the other tasks of other men, and no one is the “great one lording it over the others as do the Gentiles.” Productive social activity as Jesus would have it is not that way. There are many associations of Christians with no one telling another his task, no one wasting an ounce of talent on the purely authoritative task. In them are many real leaders, with small salaries too. But not many churches are that way yet; the very place where we ought to find it so. No wonder it is not much in the state. They say that the American home has no longer any authority. Thank God for that. Homes have a good chance to become Christian, if so.

My conception of God has no authority in it. He is the best, truest, busiest, strongest, most patient, kind and loving Person among all the workers of the world. He can do any man's work. He works at all the common tasks of men, changing from one to the other, getting stronger as we, while he works. It is, indeed, a big family our heavenly Father has. He is pretty busy with us all. We do not get along any too well working together. But we stick together. He, at least, stays by the job. He works on, intensely busy, with a suggestive look at us now and then. Some understand what he means and accept the invitation; laying hold with him. Others will do so soon.

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### (c) CONCLUSION.

And now to sum up. This whole matter and these writings may seem quite strange to the mind steeped in the doctrines commonly taught and lost in endless unproductive work. Where is God, static, dignified and perfect? Where is Divinity proved and established by miracles? Where are the virgin births and the physical resurrections? Where is the blood atonement for sins? Where is perfection in the religious life? Where are our high ideals of life? Above all and as a basis of all, where is religion revealed on mountain tops and authoritative utterances? Where is the infallible Bible? Where are heaven and hell, punishment and rewards by and by? Where are the mysteries of midnight visions, of gods coming in the clouds, and of "Three-in-One's?" Where are sacraments, ceremonial offerings and sacred places? Where is the church the same yesterday, today and forever? Where are our creeds and our articles of religion? Where?

I—do—not—know. And I do not care. I know there are doctrines concerning these things grounded in sacred scriptures. I have read them somewhat. I have tried to vitalize them in my own personal experience a good deal more. I have failed in this. They are mechanical and unreal, and are very much aside from my life. They have interested my mind and are quite intricate intellectual problems. But they do not stay with me. I turn from them to people and the his-

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toric records, all records and all people; to the voice of God within me and in all men.

Here I live. And as I live, I find one, Jesus, who has lived and is living in the same human society. I find all my soul desires in his intimate communion with the Father and loving service of men. With him I live. I am satisfied. He is a very real person to me and as I see him in his relations to others. I do not want to prove him divine. I could not do it if I would. His presence makes me ashamed to think of doing it. He satisfies me. In material things all is unrest, change, new forms and compositions. In the plant world, growth and evolution. In the animal world, development, life, higher forms and species. In thought, the same unfolding life; mental activity more and more profound. In social organization, the whole world is in continual travail. In moral and spiritual things, the same evolving, unfolding life. Nothing can be found static and complete. Nothing is perfected. Least of all is God in his work and revelation. All is a wondrous ongoing. All is alive.

What God has revealed of himself is a *living* manifestation. Countless revelations all keyed to an evolving life. Revealed religion? There is no other to be found. His image is in everything. Is God different from his revelations? Is Jesus different from the living personality before our eyes? When he saves more people today and wins all the world, is he not thus a

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larger revelation of the Father than he was nineteen centuries ago? Has he not lived a deeper saving power for men? He was a living personality then. Is he less now? A living personal will, revealing the Father and saving men, he lives with me to the uttermost and beyond. And that is all.







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